

South Carolina

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR)



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Overview of the Development and Implementation of the South Carolina State Performance Plan

The development of the State Performance Plan (SPP) for South Carolina will facilitate the South Carolina Department of Education (SCSDE) in improving educational results and functional outcomes for children. The development of the Annual Performance Report (APR) in previous years was a springboard for the development of the SPP. The SPP for South Carolina evaluates the state's efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA '04). The plan describes how the state will identify areas of concern and improve the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for children with disabilities. The state has established rigorous and measurable targets, valid and reliable data collection methods, and improvement activities with timelines and resources to implement activities. The progress of the state and each local education agency (LEA) within South Carolina toward the accomplishment of the targets within each indicator will be reported annually to the public.

The SPP was developed with stakeholder input. Stakeholders, including parents of children with disabilities, individuals with disabilities, teachers, representatives of institutions of higher education, local and state education officials, special education administrators, representatives of state agencies involved in the delivery of related services to children with disabilities, representatives of private schools, representatives of vocational programs, and representatives of juvenile justice and correctional facilities were invited to be a part of this process. Mid South Regional Resource Center personnel facilitated an overview and planning meeting. Stakeholders had an opportunity to provide meaningful input concerning the development of targets, activities, and resources. The Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) staff took this input and developed the framework of the SPP. A core team from the OEC authored the final document of the SPP. During the process of developing the SPP, stakeholders were involved through telephone calls, email messages, and conferencing to provide guidance to the OEC staff.

The dissemination of the final SPP to the public must result in visibility, political support, and funding of programs for children with disabilities. The targets and activities outlined in the SPP will only be implemented through collaborative efforts among politicians, educators, parents, members of agencies providing services to individuals with disabilities, members of the faith community, and members of the business community. This collaboration must include the establishment of communities of practice in the provision of services to children with disabilities.

In order to promote visibility, political support, and funding, the OEC will present the SPP to other offices within the SCSDE, LEAs, institutions of higher education, education related professional organizations, and agencies providing services to children with disabilities. In addition, the OEC will conduct regional forums to provide an overview of the SPP for community partners. An opportunity for input will be provided during each presentation. The implementation of the SPP must be an ongoing process and amendments based on stakeholder input will be considered during the development of each subsequent APR.

The dissemination of the SPP should facilitate the implementation of the SPP. As outlined in the SPP, the need for coordination of programs within the SCSDE and with other agencies is a priority for improving educational results and functional outcomes for students with disabilities. The OEC will work with other offices within the SCSDE and other state agencies to coordinate programs and funding. Students with disabilities are general education students first and IDEA '04 dollars and programs should supplement the general curriculum. Through the dissemination and coordinated efforts in the implementation of the SPP, South Carolina should see all targets realized by the year 2011.

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Indicator 1 – Percent of youth with IEPs graduating from high school with a regular diploma compared to percent of all youth in the State graduating with a regular diploma.

Measurement: Measurement for youth with IEPs graduating with a diploma is the same for all youth. The description is included in the Overview of Issue.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

South Carolina will increase the percentage of students with disabilities who graduate with a high school diploma. In 2005 only 34.3% of the students with disabilities graduated with a diploma compared to 80.9% of students without disabilities as reported in the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) report for No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in South Carolina. South Carolina is ranked 53rd out of 57 states and territories nationally in the graduation rates of children with disabilities according to a report prepared by the National Center for Special Education Accountability and Monitoring and published in January 2005.

South Carolina has stringent guidelines for graduation with a diploma, offering only one recognized academic diploma for all students. Graduation with a state-issued regular diploma in South Carolina requires the completion of twenty-four Carnegie unit courses in specified areas and the successful passing of an exit exam, the High School Assessment Program (HSAP). The HSAP assesses selected South Carolina academic standards in English language arts and mathematics that students have had opportunity to master by the end of the tenth grade. Students receive a state certificate of attendance if they do not meet the requirements as outlined above. Some districts in the state have developed district diplomas. These exiting credentials generally are designed around an employment curriculum.

As part of the focused monitoring process, stakeholders chose to monitor in the area of graduation rates for students with disabilities during the 2004-05 school year. As a result of monitoring, one area in need of improvement is effective transition planning. Students must have clear and effective transition plans based on the present levels of performance to guide them through secondary school in order to increase graduation rates, reduce dropout rates, and increase positive post school outcomes.

The South Carolina State Department of Education (SCSDE) has partnered with the Center for Disability Resources (CDR) to develop a secondary transition network. The CDR serves as a statewide contact and resource for secondary transition. A task force under the direction of the Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) is currently developing a professional development module with a manual to guide educators in the process of developing effective Individualized Education Programs (IEP). Members of the transition network are active members of the task force. Transition planning will begin for all students at age 14 rather than the federal requirement of age 16. The transition IEP for a student at age 14 addresses academic

achievement and functional performance. It is believed that directing the focus of transition plans on graduation with a diploma will increase the outcomes for children.

In addition, in May 2005 the South Carolina General Assembly signed into effect a law entitled the South Carolina Economic Development Act. This law requires the SCSDE to develop state models and prototypes for the development of individual graduation plans and the curriculum framework for career clusters of study that are based on the national career clusters. The statute also outlines the requirements for high schools and guidance counselors as they relate to appropriate planning for all students, particularly those at risk. It will be important for the Office of Exceptional Children to collaborate closely with the High School Redesign Team within the department to ensure appropriate plans for students with disabilities.

While this is an area of focus for the state, increasing rates for students with disabilities may take 3-5 years to show significant increases. Increasing graduation rates begins early with effective transition plans. Many students are in the last years of school and have earned very few or no Carnegie units which means they have very little chance of graduating before exiting at age 22. The focus on graduation rates, the change in the method of reporting graduation rates for students with disabilities, and an emphasis on effective transition plans should result in positive changes for students with disabilities.

Baseline Data

For the purposes of the SPP, South Carolina will target increasing the graduation rate for students with disabilities. The requirements for graduation with a state-issued regular diploma are the same for all students.

The baseline data for 2003-2004 is included in the South Carolina AYP report. South Carolina used the following methodology in calculating its graduation rates in 2003-04:

1. Identify CURRENT students starting the 9th grade for the first time four years prior to the graduation year.
2. Identify DROPOUTS starting the 9th grade for the first time four years prior to the graduation year.
3. Identify EARLY GRADUATES (State High School Diplomas only) starting the 9th grade for the first time four years prior to the graduation year.
4. Identify CURRENT YEAR GRADUATES (State High School Diplomas only) starting the 9th grade for the first time four years prior to the graduation year.

Graduation Rate equals the number of EARLY GRADUATES plus CURRENT YEAR GRADUATES divided by CURRENT plus DROPOUTS plus CURRENT YEAR GRADUATES.

Percentage of Students Graduating with a Diploma		
	2003-2004	2004-2005
Disabled	35.7	34.3
Non-Disabled	82.4	80.9

Data Source: No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress Report for South Carolina

Discussion of Baseline Data:

South Carolina submitted a plan for AYP purposes to the United States Department of Education, which was approved. In this plan, a student with a disability who receives a regular diploma in the number of years specified in the student's IEP will be considered as a student graduating with a regular diploma in the standard number of years, which should provide more accurate data concerning students with disabilities. South Carolina proposed the change because the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2004) allows students with disabilities to receive services through age 21. This change provides additional time to complete requirements for a high school diploma if determined appropriate by the IEP team.

South Carolina has 2 years of data on this Indicator because the data has been collected for the past 2 years for purposes of AYP. There is a slight decrease in graduation rates for the 2004-05 school year for students with and without disabilities.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	The percentage of youth with disabilities graduating with a high school diploma will increase by at least 2 percent annually, but not less than the rate for nondisabled peers.
2006 (2006-2007)	The percentage of youth with disabilities graduating with a high school diploma will increase by at least 2 percent annually, but not less than the rate for nondisabled peers.
2007 (2007-2008)	The percentage of youth with disabilities graduating with a high school diploma will increase by at least 2 percent annually, but not less than the rate for nondisabled peers.
2008 (2008-2009)	The percentage of youth with disabilities graduating with a high school diploma will increase by at least 2 percent annually, but not less than the rate for nondisabled peers.
2009 (2009-2010)	The percentage of youth with disabilities graduating with a high school diploma will increase by at least 2 percent annually, but not less than the rate for nondisabled peers.
2010 (2010-2011)	The percentage of youth with disabilities graduating with a high school diploma will increase by at least 2 percent annually, but not less than the rate for nondisabled peers.

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Develop a method of evaluation at the state level to identify systemic issues and single instances of noncompliance in the area of graduation rates for students with disabilities.	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • State Transition Specialist
Implement self assessment for districts (See Indicator 15.)	March 2006 – December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • LEAs
Incorporate in the self-assessment process clear procedures to assist LEAs and SOPs in identifying and analyzing graduation data collected by the South Carolina State Department of Education.	December 2005 – December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • State Transition Specialist
Identify ten districts annually with the highest discrepancy between graduation rates for students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers and monitor both onsite and offsite.	September 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • LEAs • State Transition Specialist
Collaborate with the High School Redesign Team to coordinate graduation plans with transition IEPs.	Spring 2006- Spring 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • High School Redesign Team
Develop and implement transition IEP on Excent® (IEP software).	June 2005 –January 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • State Partners in Transition • IEP Development Task Force

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Partner with the SC Center for Disability Resources to provide transition related services to stakeholders.	December 2005 – December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • CDR • State Transition Specialist
Obtain technical assistance from the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities and the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) to assist in the development of a Comprehensive Technical Assistance Plan.	December 2005 – August 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Dropout Prevention Center (Clemson University) • National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) • OEC • CDR • SC Partners in Transition
Provide comprehensive professional development to district transition coordinators and lead teachers in effective secondary practices to increase academic outcomes for students.	September 2006 – December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Dropout Prevention Center (Clemson University) • NCSET • Council for Exceptional Children Division of Career Education and Transition • OEC • CDR
Provide web-based professional development on the design and implementation of a transition IEP.	Summer 2006 –Summer 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • State Partners in Transition • IEP Development Task Force

Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Continue the implementation of the State Improvement Grant to train school-based teams to develop and implement site specific prevention systems that support the use of research-based interventions in problem behavior, reading, and strategic instruction.	December 2005 – December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • State Improvement Grant
Provide a continuum of intensive technical assistance focusing on research-based practices in increasing graduation rates.	December 2005 – December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • CDR • National Dropout Prevention Center (Clemson University)

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010**Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE**

Indicator 2 – Percent of youth with IEP's dropping out of high school compared to percent of all youth in the State dropping out of high school.

Measurement: The narrative describing what counts as “dropping out” is included in the Overview of Issue.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

South Carolina is working to decrease the number of students with and without disabilities dropping out of school, thus enabling them to transition to postsecondary education and/or meaningful employment. The South Carolina State Board of Education defines a dropout as any student who leaves school for any reason, other than death, prior to graduation or completion of a course of study and without transferring to another school or institution. Students without disabilities are not counted as a dropout if they enroll in an adult education program leading to a high school diploma or Graduate Equivalency Diploma. The Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools collects the data on dropout rates for students with and without disabilities using this definition through a state-wide data collection system, School Administrative Student Information (SASI).

The Policies and Procedures for the Collection of School Dropout Data, July 2005, has a slightly different definition of “dropout”. If a student holds a state certificate or a district special education certificate and is either a student with a disability who has completed the requirements of his/her IEP, is a student with a severe disability who has reached the age of twenty-one, or is a student with a severe disability who has entered a residential or day care facility, the student is not counted as a dropout. This is not the definition used in the data collection by the Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools.

South Carolina has one academic diploma as discussed in Indicator 1. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2004) requires the individual education program (IEP) team to make decisions concerning school completion. To place all students with disabilities on the high school diploma course of study removes the individual decision for each student, which would deny a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

Areas of concern in South Carolina include students with disabilities who have not been given the opportunity to earn a high school diploma and students with disabilities who are dropping out of high school without completing their IEP goals and objectives. The state does not have data at this time concerning the percentage of students with disabilities working toward a high school diploma, but the implementation of the new special education program data system, Excent® should enable the state to collect and analyze the data. It is believed that drop out rates will decrease as graduation rates increase. In addition, the new South Carolina Economic Development Act described in Indicator 1 should have an impact on retaining students in school.

The Partners in Transition Team is working collaboratively to identify evidence-based practices to reduce the number of dropouts. This team consists of representatives from our state parent training and information center; community and adult agency personnel; technical college and university representatives; high school students; and South Carolina State Department of Education staff. The team will provide ongoing guidance as the SPP and subsequent APRs are implemented. In addition, the Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) will monitor the discrepancy rates for students with and without disabilities in each individual district through the self-assessment process. Districts with high discrepancy rates must address strategies in their annual self-assessment to improve dropout rates for students with disabilities.

Baseline Data for FFY 2004 (2003-2004):

The baseline data for 2004-2005 will be used for the purposes of this SPP. The dropout rate is the proportion of students who, during a single year, leave high school without completing a program of study and do not transfer to another institution. The dropout rate is calculated by the number of dropouts in grades 9 through 12 that are reported as of October 1st. These numbers are then divided by the number of students enrolled in grades 9 through 12 as of October 1st. These numbers are then multiplied by 100.

Number student dropouts as of October 1st (9th through 12th grade) divided by number of students enrolled as of October 1st (9th through 12th grade) times 100.

	2003-2004
Total Drop Out Rate	2.95%
NonDisabled Drop Out Rate	2.42%
Disabled Drop Out Rate	.53%

Discussion of Baseline Data:

Dropout data was submitted for the 2003-2004 school year because the reporting process by the SCSDE Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools is one year in arrears. Using the above formula, the dropout rate for disabled students was 0.53% compared to 2.4% rate for nondisabled students. Accordingly, South Carolina's dropout rate for disabled students is comparatively lower than the dropout rate for nondisabled students.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	The drop out rate for students with disabilities will decrease by at least .02 percent annually, but not less than the drop out rate for nondisabled students.
2006 (2006-2007)	The drop out rate for students with disabilities will decrease by at least .02 percent annually, but not less than the drop out rate for nondisabled students.
2007 (2007-2008)	The drop out rate for students with disabilities will decrease by at least .02 percent annually, but not less than the drop out rate for nondisabled students.
2008 (2008-2009)	The drop out rate for students with disabilities will decrease by at least .02 percent annually, but not less than the drop out rate for nondisabled students.
2009 (2009-2010)	The drop out rate for students with disabilities will decrease by at least .02 percent annually, but not less than the drop out rate for nondisabled students.
2010 (2010-2011)	The drop out rate for students with disabilities will decrease by at least .02 percent annually, but not less than the drop out rate for nondisabled students.

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Incorporate in the self-assessment process clear procedures to assist LEAs and SOPs methods in identifying and analyzing drop out data collected by the South Carolina State Department of Education.	December 2005 – December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • State Transition Specialist
Implement self-assessment for districts (See Indicator 15).	March 2006 – December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • LEAs

Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Develop a method of evaluation at the state level to identify systemic issues and single instances of noncompliance in the area of dropout rates for students with disabilities.	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • State Transition Specialist

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Elicit support from the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities and the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) to assist in the development of a Comprehensive Technical Assistance Plan.	December 2005 – August 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Dropout Prevention Center (Clemson University) • National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) • OEC • SC Center for Disability Resources • Partners in Transition
Implement the Comprehensive Technical Assistance Plan (Implementation will be monitored on an ongoing-basis and the Comprehensive Plan will be adjusted as necessary).	September 2006 – December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Dropout Prevention Center (Clemson University) • National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) • OEC • SC Center for Disability Resources
Provide a continuum of intensive technical assistance focusing on research-based practices in decreasing drop out rates.	December 2005 – December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • SC Center for Disability Resources • National Dropout Prevention Center (Clemson University)

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Indicator 3: Participation and performance of children with disabilities on statewide assessments:

- A. Percent of districts meeting the State's AYP objectives for progress for disability subgroup.
- B. Participation rate for children with IEPs in a regular assessment with no accommodations; regular assessment with accommodations; alternate assessment against grade level standards; alternate assessment against alternate achievement standards.
- C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level standards and alternate achievement standards.

Measurement:

A. Percent = # of districts meeting the State's AYP objectives for progress for the disability subgroup (children with IEPs) divided by the total # of districts in the State times 100.

B. Participation rate =

- a. # of children with IEPs in grades assessed;
- b. # of children with IEPs in regular assessment with and without accommodations (percent = **b** divided by **a** times 100);*
- c. # of children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate achievement standards (percent = **e** divided by **a** times 100).

Account for any children included in **a** but not included in **b**, **c**, **d**, or **e** above

Overall Percent = **b + c** divided by **a**.

C. Proficiency rate =

- a. # of children with IEPs in grades assessed;
- b. # of children with IEPs in grades assessed who are proficient or above as measured by the regular assessment with and without accommodations (percent = **b** divided by **a** times 100); *
- c. # of children with IEPs in grades assessed who are proficient or above as measured against alternate achievement standards (percent = **e** divided by **a** times 100).

Overall Percent = **b + c** divided by **a**.

*State AYP data does not disaggregate scores by students with accommodations or without accommodations.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

All students with disabilities participate in statewide assessments with or without accommodations and/or modifications or in an alternate assessment measured on alternate achievement standards for the grade in which students are enrolled. The following is a brief description of the high stakes accountability program in South Carolina:

South Carolina Readiness Assessment (SCRA)

SCRA is a standards-based adaptation of the Work Sampling System, designed for use throughout the kindergarten and first grade years.

Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT)

The PACT is administered in grades 3-8 and includes English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies tests. Students receive a scale score and a categorical score of Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, or Advanced.

PACT-ALT

The PACT-Alt is a portfolio-based assessment system that was developed to meet the needs of students with significant disabilities who cannot participate in the PACT assessment even with accommodations and/or modifications. Portfolios contain evidence of student performance relative to progress within the content areas of the South Carolina Curriculum Standards. In the spring of 2006, the state will pilot a task based alternate assessment field test in English language arts and mathematics. Science and social studies will be field tested in the fall of 2006. The proposed title of the assessment is the South Carolina Alternate Assessment Program (SC-ALT).

High School Assessment Program (HSAP)

Students in the second semester of their second year after their initial enrollment in the ninth grade take the HSAP as required for graduation with a South Carolina high school diploma. Students may take any section failed again in repeating years until the section is passed.

The High School Assessment Program - Alternate Assessment (HSAP-Alt)

HSAP-Alt is an assessment system for high school aged students with significant cognitive disabilities who cannot participate in the HSAP even with accommodations and/or modifications. The HSAP-Alt utilizes performance tasks to assess students' mathematics and English language arts skill development. The performance tasks are scripted activities, which allow the teacher to assess the student's learning on specific concepts and skills aligned with the South Carolina Curriculum

Participation of Students with Disabilities in Statewide Assessments

Rates of participation for students with disabilities participating in statewide assessments are at 98% for English language arts and 98.2% for math. The testing results of those students who are enrolled on the 45th day of school and remain enrolled continuously until the time of testing are included in AYP calculations. The high rates of participation can be attributed to policies that prohibit students with disabilities from being excluded and to use of a variety of participation options. Students with disabilities could participate in the regular assessment with or without accommodations, in an out-of-level assessment, or in an alternate assessment. Beginning in the spring of 2007, out-of-level- assessment will not be an option for students with disabilities. South Carolina currently does not have modified achievement standards. The development of these standards could make the statewide assessment more accessible for students with disabilities who do not meet criteria for alternate assessment.

Performance of Students with Disabilities in Statewide Assessments

The performance of students with disabilities in English language arts and mathematics needs significant improvement to meet future AYP benchmarks. The performance of students without disabilities in South Carolina in the area of English language arts has declined. Students with disabilities followed the same trend with 12.6% of the students scoring proficient or above in 2005 compared to 12.9% in 2004. The scores for math have improved for students without disabilities. The scores for students with disabilities remained constant with 10% scoring proficient or above.

Because the performance of all students with disabilities is a concern in the state, the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee has recently completed a five-year longitudinal analysis of the PACT scores for all students. Stakeholders in South Carolina targeted the reading performance of students with disabilities as a focused monitoring area for the 2004–05 school year. The process developed for focused monitoring did not specifically identify compliance areas to enable districts to improve the reading achievement for students with disabilities. Currently the Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) has asked the National Center for Special Education Accountability and Monitoring (NCSEAM) for assistance in analyzing and improving monitoring process.

Using the research on improving academic achievement provided through the National Center for Progress Monitoring, South Carolina is moving toward the development of the use of progress monitoring for formative assessment and for linking progress monitoring to state tests. The OEC will assist districts in the development of a formative assessment system that allows educators to monitor student progress during the school year. Dr. Stan Deno from the University of Minnesota and a district team from the Bethel School District in Eugene, Oregon have provided training for special education directors and general education administrators on the implementation of frequent progress monitoring to inform instruction for all students and the use of progress monitoring as a predictor of student outcomes on state tests. The OEC will pilot the use of curriculum-based measurement for progress monitoring to inform instruction at the elementary level. This data will be correlated to the PACT data for 2006-07 school year. The use of curriculum-based measurement as a means to measure responsiveness to intervention in both general and special education, to set goals in individualized education programs in academic areas, and to develop exit criteria will be phased in statewide over the next six years.

Activities focused on systemic change will impact the participation and performance of students with disabilities on statewide assessments. General education and special education teachers need specific training in instructional decision-making, progress-monitoring, formative assessment, and curriculum-based measurement. In addition, achievement levels of students with disabilities on state accountability tests can be improved with the effective use of accommodations and modifications. Results of a study conducted in South Carolina and substantiated in the literature reveal that special education teachers do not utilize data to make decisions about the use of accommodations and modifications. The OEC must provide training in the use of peer-reviewed research to determine appropriate accommodations and modifications based on students' unique needs as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of accommodations and modifications through data collection procedures. Special education and general education teachers must be trained in developing a framework to align curriculum, instruction, and assessment for all students.

Baseline Data for FFY 2004 (2004-2005):**Percentage of Districts meeting AYP Objectives for Students with Disabilities**

Year	2004	2005
English-Language Arts	45.9%	42.4%
Math	30.6%	58.3%

Participation Rates of Student with Disabilities on State Assessment

Year	2004	2005
English-Language Arts	97.5%	98.0%
Math	97.6%	98.2%

Performance of Students with and without Disabilities on State Assessment

	2004		2005	
	Percentage of Students with Disabilities Scoring Proficient and Advanced	Percentage of Students without Disabilities Scoring Proficient and Advanced	Percentage of Students with Disabilities Scoring Proficient and Advanced	Percentage of Students without Disabilities Scoring Proficient and Advanced
English-Language Arts	12.9	40.2	12.6	39.7
Math	10	38.2	10	38.4

Discussion of Baseline Data:

The data presented above is a part of South Carolina's AYP report for the 2004–05. The data includes the percentage of districts meeting AYP objectives for the subgroup of students with disabilities. The participation of students with disabilities continues to be adequate as defined by the No Child Left Behind legislation with 98% of the students with disabilities participating in state assessment. The performance of students with disabilities represents all students who participated in the state test without accommodations, with accommodations, and in alternate assessment. South Carolina does not have an option of grade level standards measured against modified achievement standards. There has been an increase in the percent of districts meeting AYP objectives for students with disabilities in the area of math. The percentage of districts meeting AYP objectives for students with disabilities in the area of English language arts has remained constant. The percentage of students with and without disabilities scoring proficient or advanced in English language arts has decreased slightly. The performance of students with disabilities scoring proficient and advanced in math has remained constant.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	<p>A. Percent meeting AYP:</p> <p>The percent of districts meeting AYP objectives for progress in the disability subgroup in English language arts will increase from 42% to 45%.</p> <p>The percent of districts meeting AYP objectives for progress in the disability subgroup in math will increase from 58% to 59%.</p> <p>B. Participation rate:</p> <p>The participation rate for children with IEPs on state accountability assessment in the areas of English language arts and math will remain at or above 95%.</p> <p>C. Proficiency Rates:</p> <p>The performance of students with disabilities in English language arts scoring below proficient will decrease by 3% annually as measured by South Carolina state assessment.</p> <p>The performance of students with disabilities in math scoring below proficient will decrease by 3% annually as measured by South Carolina state assessment.</p>
2006 (2006-2007)	<p>A. Percent meeting AYP:</p> <p>The percent of districts meeting AYP objectives for progress in the disability subgroup in English language arts will increase from 45% to 48%.</p> <p>The percent of districts meeting AYP objectives for progress in the disability subgroup in math will increase from 59% to 60%.</p> <p>B. Participation rate:</p> <p>The participation rate for children with IEPs on state accountability assessment in the areas of English language arts and math will remain at or above 95%.</p> <p>C. Proficiency Rates:</p> <p>The performance of students with disabilities in English language arts scoring below proficient will decrease by 3% annually as measured by South Carolina state assessment.</p> <p>The performance of students with disabilities in math scoring below proficient will decrease by 3% annually as measured by South Carolina state assessment.</p>
2007 (2007-2008)	<p>A. Percent meeting AYP:</p> <p>The percent of districts meeting AYP objectives for progress in the disability subgroup</p>

	<p>in English language arts will increase from 48% to 51%.</p> <p>The percent of districts meeting AYP objectives for progress in the disability subgroup in math will increase from 60% to 61%.</p> <p>B. Participation rate:</p> <p>The participation rate for children with IEPs on state accountability assessment in the areas of English language arts and math will remain at or above 95%.</p> <p>C. Proficiency Rates:</p> <p>The performance of students with disabilities in English language arts scoring below proficient will decrease by 3% annually as measured by South Carolina state assessment.</p> <p>The performance of students with disabilities in math scoring below proficient will decrease by 3% annually as measured by South Carolina state assessment.</p>
2008 (2008-2009)	<p>A. Percent meeting AYP:</p> <p>The percent of districts meeting AYP objectives for progress in the disability subgroup in English language arts will increase from 51% to 54%.</p> <p>The percent of districts meeting AYP objectives for progress in the disability subgroup in math will increase from 61% to 62%.</p> <p>B. Participation rate:</p> <p>The participation rate for children with IEPs on state accountability assessment in the areas of English language arts and math will remain at or above 95%.</p> <p>C. Proficiency Rates:</p> <p>The performance of students with disabilities in English language arts scoring below proficient will decrease by 3% annually as measured by South Carolina state assessment.</p> <p>The performance of students with disabilities in math scoring below proficient will decrease by 3% annually as measured by South Carolina state assessment.</p>
2009 (2009-2010)	<p>A. Percent meeting AYP:</p> <p>The percent of districts meeting AYP objectives for progress in the disability subgroup in English language arts will increase from 54% to 57%.</p> <p>The percent of districts meeting AYP objectives for progress in the disability subgroup in math will increase from 62% to 63%.</p> <p>B. Participation rate:</p> <p>The participation rate for children with IEPs on state accountability assessment in the areas of English language arts and math will remain at or above 95%.</p>

	<p>C. Proficiency Rates:</p> <p>The performance of students with disabilities in English language arts scoring below proficient will decrease by 3% annually as measured by South Carolina state assessment.</p> <p>The performance of students with disabilities in math scoring below proficient will decrease by 3% annually as measured by South Carolina state assessment.</p>
2010 (2010-2011)	<p>A. Percent meeting AYP:</p> <p>The percent of districts meeting AYP objectives for progress in the disability subgroup in English language arts will increase from 57% to 60%.</p> <p>The percent of districts meeting AYP objectives for progress in the disability subgroup in math will increase from 63% to 64%.</p> <p>B. Participation rate:</p> <p>The participation rate for children with IEPs on state accountability assessment in the areas of English language arts and math will remain at or above 95%.</p> <p>C. Proficiency Rates:</p> <p>The performance of students with disabilities in English language arts scoring below proficient will decrease by 3% annually as measured by South Carolina state assessment.</p> <p>The performance of students with disabilities in math scoring below proficient will decrease by 3% annually as measured by South Carolina state assessment.</p>

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timeline	Resources
Revise alternate assessment system.	August 2005 – August 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Assessment • OEC • National Center on Educational Outcomes
Develop modified achievement standards against grade level standards.	January 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Assessment • OEC
Pilot the use of curriculum-based measurement for formative assessment to assess response to intervention, to set academic goals, and to develop exit criteria in three school districts	Spring 2006– Spring 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • National Technical Assistance Center on Student Progress Monitoring • Members of Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) • Berkeley, Charleston, and Horry LEAs
Develop of policies mandating the use of curriculum-based measurement for students with and without disabilities to assess response to intervention, to set academic goals, and to develop exit criteria for special education students.	Summer 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • National Technical Assistance Center on Student Progress Monitoring • Members of Institutions of Higher Education • Stakeholders
Include charts and graphs in the state online IEP	Summer 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • Horizon Software Company
Provide technical assistance annually to implement curriculum-based measurement.	2007 school year and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timeline	Resources
Develop a team of regional trainers and coaches to assist LEAs with the use of curriculum-based measurement to assess response to intervention, to set academic goals, and to develop exit criteria for special education.	2006–2007 school year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • National Technical Assistance Center on Student Progress Monitoring • District Level Coaches
Develop training for general and special educators in instructional decision-making, progress-monitoring, and formative assessment using the principles of universal design for learning.	January 2006-December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Center on Student Progress Monitoring • Members of IHE
Provide training in standards-aligned curriculum-based instruction and assessment.	January 2006-December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>South Carolina: Teaching, Learning, and Connecting (TLC)</i> SCSDE Web Resource • <i>Improving Achievement for Students with Disabilities through a School-wide Model – SCASA</i> • Annual Research to Practice • Members of IHE
Provide training in the use of research-based classroom accommodations and modifications.	January 2006-December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDEA Partnership • <i>Improving Achievement for Students with Disabilities through a School-wide Model - SCASA</i>
Provide training in the integration of alternate standards in classroom instruction.	August 2006 – December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCSDE Office of Assessment • National Center on Educational Outcomes
Provide training in the implementation of alternate assessment.	August 2006 –December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Assessment • National Center on Educational Outcomes
Provide training for teaching test-taking strategies to students.	August 2006 – December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Assessment • OEC
Provide training in the use of school-wide models for reading instruction through the State Improvement Grant.	January 2006 – December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Carolina State Improvement Grant
Provide parent training in standards-based instruction and assessment, accommodations and modifications, and IEP development.	January 2006-2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Center for Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities • Pro-Parents

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010**Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE****Indicator 4: Rates of suspension and expulsion:**

- A. Percent of districts identified by the State as having a significant discrepancy in the rates of suspensions and expulsions of children with disabilities for greater than ten days in a school year; and
- B. Percent of districts identified by the State as having a significant discrepancy in the rates of suspensions and expulsions of greater than ten days in a school year of children with disabilities by race and ethnicity.

Measurement:

- A. Percent = # of districts identified by the State as having significant discrepancies in the rates of suspensions and expulsions of children with disabilities for greater than ten days in a school year divided by # of districts in the State times 100.
- B. Percent = # of districts identified by the State as having significant discrepancies in the rates of suspensions and expulsions for greater than ten days in a school year of children with disabilities by race and ethnicity divided by # of districts in the State times 100.

South Carolina has defined “significant discrepancy” as a rate greater than or equal to three times the state average for suspensions and expulsions

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

South Carolina will continue to implement a system of review to ensure that every local education agency (LEA) that has a significant discrepancy in the rates of suspension and expulsion of children with disabilities for greater than ten days will have a system in place to support the provision of a free, appropriate public education to those students with disabilities. This system will expand to include the disaggregating of data by race/ethnic group.

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has identified South Carolina as being noncompliant in this area. During the previous OSEP onsite monitoring visit, South Carolina was identified as failing to ensure that appropriate personnel determined needed services and settings for children with disabilities who are suspended or expelled. In response, South Carolina included this area in its focused monitoring system. According to the OSEP review of South Carolina’s FFY 2003 Annual Performance Report (APR), South Carolina failed to define “significant discrepancy” as it pertained to rates of suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities for greater than ten days, although LEAs were rank ordered based on suspension/expulsion data. As a result of this feedback from OSEP, South Carolina has defined significant discrepancy. South Carolina is using a percentage to accurately represent the extent to which students with disabilities were suspended/expelled in an LEA in comparison across LEAs. This percentage is calculated by dividing the number of special education students suspended or expelled by the special education enrollment times 100. This data is collected through the 618 data report, Table 5. LEAs are rank ordered based on percentage of

students with disabilities who are suspended and expelled greater than ten days. The average percentage for the state is computed. A significant discrepancy occurs when LEAs are three or more times above the state average for unduplicated count of suspensions and expulsions and for multiple suspensions and expulsions totaling more than ten days. Through the monitoring process, the South Carolina State Department of Education will ensure compliance in the districts identified as having significant discrepancies.

South Carolina has regulations in place that ensure that no administrator has the authority to suspend a student (non-disabled or disabled) from a teacher's class or from the school for more than ten consecutive days for any one offense and for not more than thirty days in any one school year. State Board of Education Regulation 43-243 sets forth the disciplinary procedures for students with disabilities that require the individual education program (IEP) team to determine how services will continue to be provided that allow the student to access the general curriculum.

The state used a comparison of suspension/expulsion rates of students with disabilities among local education agencies (LEAs) to analyze suspension/expulsion data because there is no data available relative to the suspension/expulsion rate for students without disabilities. The 618 data for LEAs was used to establish baselines. The state used the data that was reported for Table 5, Section A, Columns 3A, 3B, and 3C, Report of Children with Disabilities Unilaterally Removed or Suspended/Expelled for More than Ten Days of the Annual Report of Children Served to rank order and analyze the data submitted by each LEA in the state. A significant discrepancy is defined as being greater than or equal to three times the state average.

During the 2003-04 and 2004-05 school years, the state issued policy letters regarding discipline requirements for students with disabilities. The policy letters were distributed to LEA superintendents, principals, directors of programs for students with disabilities, and other individuals responsible for the discipline of students with disabilities. The Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) has entered into a collaborative agreement with the South Carolina Association of School Administrators to provide professional development regarding best practices in positive behavior supports.

During 2004-2005, the state continued implementation of the State Improvement Grant to train school-based teams in the use of positive behavior interventions and supports. One-hundred-four teams have been trained and are at various stages of implementation. In the annual Research-to-Practice Institutes professional development has been provided to assist teams in conducting effective functional behavior assessments and in developing effective behavior intervention plans.

Baseline Data for FFY 2004 (2004-2005):

2004-2005 Reporting Period Districts Significantly Above State Average for Unduplicated Count of Suspensions/Expulsions		Percent Above
Allendale		12.50%
Marion 07		6.97%
Dorchester 04		6.63%
Hampton 02		6.39%
Orangeburg 03		5.89%
Georgetown		5.72%
Williamsburg		5.18%
Marlboro		5.16%
Dillon 01		4.96%
Lee		4.84%
State Average		1.60%

2003-2004 Reporting Period Districts Significantly Above State Average for Unduplicated Count of Suspensions/Expulsions		Percent Above
Lee		8.59%
Clarendon 01		7.66%
Georgetown		6.48%
Sumter 17		4.71%
Darlington		4.38%
Colleton		3.55%
State Average		1.17%

Discussion of Baseline Data:

South Carolina reported district data compared to the state average. During the 2003-2004 school year, the state average based on the 618 data was 1.17% for the unduplicated count of students with disabilities who were suspended or expelled for greater than ten days. For the 2004-2005 school year, the state average was 1.60% for the number of students with disabilities who were suspended or expelled for greater than ten days. These averages were computed based on the LEAs and SOPs that reported suspensions and expulsions greater than ten days. Ten of the 88 LEAs and SOPs (11.36%) have a significant discrepancy in the number of suspensions and expulsions as defined by the SCSDE.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	Reduce the percentage of districts that have a rate that is significantly discrepant from the state average from 11% to 10%.
2006 (2006-2007)	Reduce the percentage of districts that have a rate that is significantly discrepant from the state average from 10% to 9%. Report baseline data concerning race and ethnicity.
2007 (2007-2008)	Reduce the percentage of districts that have a rate that is significantly discrepant from the state average from 9% to 8%.
2008 (2008-2009)	Reduce the percentage of districts that have a rate that is significantly discrepant from the state average from 8% to 7%.
2009 (2009-2010)	Reduce the percentage of districts that have a rate that is significantly discrepant from the state average from 7% to 6%.
2010 (2010-2011)	Reduce the percentage of districts that have a rate that is significantly discrepant from the state average from 6% to 5%.

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Additional activities for improvement specific to race and ethnicity will be developed once baseline is established.

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Design and implement self-assessment instrument designed to identify systemic issues for suspension and expulsion for LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs and review annually.	February 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC Leadership team • LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart program leadership teams • Mid South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC)

Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Review and revise existing regulations and policies regarding discipline of students with disabilities to align with IDEA '04.	December 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • LEA staff and other stakeholder • Federal Regulations
Convene SCSDE task force to establish a state plan for the implementation of positive behavior supports through the coordinated efforts of the Offices of Safe and Drug Free Schools, School Leadership, School Quality, Curriculum and Standards, Technology, and Research.	June 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSRRRC • OEC staff • Other SCSDE staff
Assist LEAs in the development of a tracking/monitoring system for suspensions and expulsions to ensure the provision of FAPE.	December 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • Excent® staff • LEA pilot districts • Office of Research • Office of Technology

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Provide professional development to address the issues of behavior through a problem solving model.	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHE staff • Office of School Leadership • Exemplar SIG schools
Provide professional development to assist LEAs in the implementation of a schoolwide model to facilitate the revision of district discipline processes to emphasize the prevention of behavior problems and the use of positive behavior supports. This model will utilize a three-tiered approach to prevention, instruction, and intervention.	November 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Improvement Grant staff (SIG)· • Positive Behavior Intervention Supports staff (PBS)· • Institutions of higher education staff (IHE) • OEC staff·
Provide specific professional development to district and school administrators concerning the use of functional behavior assessments and positive behavior supports as a means to prevent suspensions and expulsions.	March 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHE staff • South Carolina Association of School Administrators (SCASA) • Office of School Leadership

Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Provide professional development to address the use of positive behavior intervention supports through best practices for instruction through the annual Research to Practice Institute.	July 2006 and annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SIG and OEC staff• IHE staff• Exemplar SIG schools
Collaborate with other agencies such as Department of Mental Health, Department of Health and Human Services, and Department of Disabilities and Special Needs to provide technical assistance to service providers concerning the use of positive behavior intervention supports.	March 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• OEC staff• IHE staff• Other agency staff

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Indicator 5: Percent of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21:

- A. Removed from regular class less than 21% of the day;
- B. Removed from regular class greater than 60% of the day; or
- C. Served in public or private separate schools, residential placements, or homebound or hospital placements.

Measurement:

- A. Percent = # of children with IEPs removed from regular class less than 21% of the day divided by the total # of students aged 6 through 21 with IEPs times 100.
- B. Percent = # of children with IEPs removed from regular class greater than 60% of the day divided by the total # of students aged 6 through 21 with IEPs times 100.
- C. Percent = # of children with IEPs served in public or private separate schools, residential placements, or homebound or hospital placements divided by the total # of students aged 6 through 21 with IEPs times 100.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

The Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) must act to ensure that students with disabilities are educated in settings with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate based on their unique needs. Special education and related services must provide the opportunity for students with disabilities to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum. Only after the individualized education program (IEP) team determines through a review of the present levels of academic achievement and functional performance that a student with a disability cannot participate with appropriate supplementary aids and services in the regular education setting should the student be removed from the regular class. To ensure the provision of a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE), the OEC must provide support and assistance to local education agencies (LEAs), state operated programs (SOPs), HeadStart programs, and families to guarantee that students with disabilities are involved in and progress in the general curriculum.

There is an identified need for professional development for educators, families, and service providers in the area of providing appropriate supplementary aids and services to students with disabilities in the general education curriculum to address possible inappropriate LRE placements. Inconsistent data reporting has also complicated this issue. Until FY 03-04 South Carolina defined a self-contained placement as being removed from the general education setting more than fifty percent of the school day. A resource placement was defined as any removal from the regular education setting with the exception of special education services such as speech-language, vision, and hearing services. These services were typically reported as itinerant.

In order for LEAs to receive state funding for students with disabilities, the South Carolina Education Finance Act of 1977 (EFA) requires a minimum number of minutes of instructional time per week or its equivalent in an approved program model. The rationale behind this requirement has been based on a systemic attempt to match a “qualifying” level of instructional services to state funding. In some instances this has created a possible financial rationale for removing students from less restrictive settings. In order to receive the state funding, the student’s IEP must reflect a minimum of five hours of direct/indirect instruction per week. This funding is designed to address the gap between the level of federal funding and the actual cost of educating students with disabilities.

Current state regulations under the Defined Program restrict the establishment of schoolwide models to promote the use of a variety of service delivery models. Students are often placed in more restrictive settings due to the constraints placed on districts by these regulations concerning caseloads and categorical placements. For example, a student needing specially designed reading instruction might be placed in a self-contained program for the entire day rather than only for the block of time needed for reading instruction with instruction and accommodations then provided in content areas in the general education setting.

In order to ensure FAPE in the LRE, the South Carolina State Department of Education (SCSDE) has identified priorities across the areas of program/professional development and monitoring/procedural administration. The OEC is currently expanding its provision of professional development and the dissemination of peer-reviewed research through collaboration with other offices within the SCSDE, parent advocacy groups, and other stakeholders. Based on input from stakeholders, the OEC has recognized the need to integrate procedure and process in providing professional development to all stakeholders involved in the provision of FAPE in the LRE. The OEC is developing a data collection system that includes consistent operational definitions. This will ensure an accurate accounting of placements for students with disabilities. The OEC has also recognized the need to collaborate with other offices within the SCSDE in order to address funding and other state regulatory issues.

Baseline Data for FFY 2004 (2004-2005):

Percentage of Students Ages 6-21 with Disabilities Served in Different Educational Environment

	Students Served in Special Education > 60%	Students served in Special Education <21%	Students served in public or private separate schools, residential placements, or homebound/hospital settings
2003	18.82 %	48.00%	--
2004	19.45%	48.00%	--
2005	23.21%	49.31%	2.19%

Discussion of Baseline Data:

Trend data show that the percent of students served in more restrictive placements (more than 60% of the time) has increased over the past three years. The data reveals that South Carolina is significantly below the national average and among the lowest ranked states in the LRE data

measurement of students removed from the regular class greater than 60% of the school day. Trend data also show that the percent of students served in special education less than 21% of the time has increased slightly. Data from 2005 show a baseline of 2.19% of students were served in public or private separate school, residential placements, or homebound/hospital placements. This means that South Carolina is ranked ten out of fifty-seven states and territories for this category.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	<p>a. Increase by 1% from baseline the students with disabilities removed from regular class less than 21% of the day to target of 50.31%.</p> <p>b. Decrease by 1% from baseline the students with disabilities removed from regular class greater than 60% of the day to target of 22.21%.</p> <p>c. Maintain current ranking in the top fifteen for percent of students served in public or private separate school, residential placements, or homebound/hospital placements.</p>
2006 (2006-2007)	<p>a. Increase by 1% from baseline the students with disabilities removed from regular class less than 21% of the day to target of 51.31%.</p> <p>b. Decrease by 1% from baseline the students with disabilities removed from regular class greater than 60% of the day to target of 22.21%.</p> <p>c. Maintain current ranking in the top fifteen for percent of students served in public or private separate school, residential placements, or homebound/hospital placements.</p>
2007 (2007-2008)	<p>a. Increase by 1% from baseline the students with disabilities removed from regular class less than 21% of the day to target of 52.31%.</p> <p>b. Decrease by 1% from baseline the students with disabilities removed from regular class greater than 60% of the day to target of 20.21%.</p> <p>c. Maintain current ranking in the top fifteen for percent of students served in public or private separate school, residential placements, or homebound/hospital placements.</p>

<p>2008 (2008-2009)</p>	<p>a. Increase by 1% from baseline the students with disabilities removed from regular class less than 21% of the day to target of 53.31%.</p> <p>b. Decrease by 1% from baseline the students with disabilities removed from regular class greater than 60% of the day to target of 19.21%.</p> <p>c. Maintain current ranking in the top fifteen for percent of students served in public or private separate school, residential placements, or homebound/hospital placements.</p>
<p>2009 (2009-2010)</p>	<p>a. Increase by 1% from baseline the students with disabilities removed from regular class less than 21% of the day to target of 54.31%.</p> <p>b. Decrease by 1% from baseline the students with disabilities removed from regular class greater than 60% of the day to target of 18.21%.</p> <p>c. Maintain current ranking in the top fifteen for percent of students served in public or private separate school, residential placements, or homebound/hospital placements.</p>
<p>2010 (2010-2011)</p>	<p>a. Increase by 1% from baseline the students with disabilities removed from regular class less than 21% of the day to target of 55.31%.</p> <p>b. Decrease by 1% from baseline the students with disabilities removed from regular class greater than 60% of the day to target of 17.21%.</p> <p>c. Maintain current ranking in the top fifteen for percent of students served in public or private separate school, residential placements, or homebound/hospital placements.</p>

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Develop an evaluation method to identify systemic issues and single instances of noncompliance in the area of LRE (see Indicator 15 for details concerning the focused monitoring process).	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM) OEC Leadership team Stakeholders
Design self-assessment process to assist LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs in analyzing LRE data and planning improvements.	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC Leadership team LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart program stakeholders NCSEAM Mid South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC)
Implement self-assessment instrument for LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs and review annually.	February 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC Leadership team LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart program leadership teams
Develop regulations and policies:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Board of Education (SBE) regulations based on IDEA '04 	June 30, 2006 or no later than six month following the issuance of the federal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Regulations National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) OEC Leadership team Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and revise SBE regulations concerning FAPE in the LRE 	June 30, 2006 or no later than six month following the issuance of the federal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of School Quality Office of Educational Leadership Office of Teacher Quality OEC Office of Assessment
Revise and review of funding ties in EFA.	January 2006 – January 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel Office of Policy and Planning OEC

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Develop IEP process training guide to accompany web-based IEP software program.	October 2005 – June 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excent® staff • OEC staff • IEP Development Team
Provide professional development to enhance awareness of the provision of FAPE in the LRE; target audiences to include LEA level and school level administrators, educators, related service providers, paraeducators, and families.	January 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs)
Provide technical assistance designed from data gathered through self-assessments of LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs, focused monitoring, and review of complaints/due process hearing requests related to LRE.	June 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHEs • Professional organizations • Parent advocacy groups • Stakeholders
Collaborate with departments of education within IHEs to develop appropriate preservice training and experiences concerning provision of FAPE in the LRE.	January 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • Office of Teacher Certification • IHE Departments of Education

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Indicator 6: Percent of preschool children with IEPs who received special education and related services in settings with typically developing peers (e.g., early childhood settings, home, and part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education settings).

Measurement: Percent = # of preschool children with IEPs who received special education services in settings with typically developing peers divided by the total # of preschool children with IEPs times 100.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

South Carolina will ensure that preschool children with disabilities receive special education services through a continuum of settings. Each school district/agency must ensure that to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities, including students in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with students who are nondisabled and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removals of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment occur only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Each school district/agency must ensure that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of students with disabilities for special education and related services. This continuum must be considered in the determination of the placements of the student with disabilities. All the various components of the individualized education program (IEP) including levels of educational performance, goals, objectives/benchmarks must be reviewed and considered by the IEP team in selecting the appropriate placement option for the student. In making its recommendation, the IEP team must consider each of the program options from the range of options as follows: regular class with supportive services (itinerant/resource), self-contained classes, special school instruction, hospital/homebound/home-based instruction, community agency programs (e.g., Head Start for preschool children), and other program options.

In determining the educational placement of a student with a disability, including a preschool child with a disability, each school district/agency must ensure that the placement decision is made by a group of persons, including the parents, who are knowledgeable about the student and about the meaning of the evaluation data and the placement options and must ensure that the placement decision is made in conformity with the least restrictive environment (LRE) provisions of the regulations.

Historically, South Carolina has addressed FAPE in the LRE for preschool children through the provision of collaborative professional development opportunities with BabyNet, the Office of Early Childhood, and interagency groups. There is an identified need for professional development for educators, families, and service providers in the area of appropriate supplementary aids and services for students with disabilities in the general education curriculum to ensure appropriate LRE placements. Inconsistent data reporting has also complicated this issue. Until FY 03-04 South Carolina defined a self-contained placement as being removed from the general education setting more than fifty percent of the school day. A

resource placement was defined as any removal from the regular education setting with the exception of special education services such as speech-language, vision, and hearing services. These services were typically reported as itinerant. For the preschool population, additional issues have included a lack of general education settings available in all districts for three and four year old children who do not have disabilities, and inconsistency in the definitions of settings for preschool children with disabilities.

In order to ensure FAPE in the LRE, the South Carolina State Department of Education (SCSDE) has identified priorities across the areas of program/professional development and monitoring/procedural administration. The OEC is currently expanding its provision of professional development and the dissemination of peer-reviewed research through collaboration with other offices within the SCSDE, parent advocacy groups, institutions of higher education, and other stakeholders. Based on input from stakeholders, the OEC has recognized the need to integrate procedure and process in providing professional development to all stakeholders involved in the provision of FAPE in the LRE. The OEC is developing a data collection system that includes consistent operational definitions. This will ensure an accurate accounting of placements for students with disabilities. The OEC has also recognized the need to collaborate with other offices within the SCSDE in order to address funding and other state regulatory issues.

Additional efforts to increase access to settings with non-disabled peers have included a Preschool Technical Assistance Project involving OEC staff, University of South Carolina staff, and the Office of Early Childhood staff. This project is a collaborative grant designed to develop, implement, and evaluate a statewide technical assistance program centered in the use of evidence-based practices for children who either have or are at risk to develop behavior problems.

Baseline Data for FFY 2004 (2004-2005):

Baseline data for 2004-05 are presented in Table 1. These data are based on the definitions in the Office of Special Education Programs' (OSEP) document entitled, "OSEP IDEA, PART B DATA DICTIONARY" dated February 2005. "Early Childhood Settings" are defined as being early childhood classes, home environment, and part-time early childhood classes/part-time early childhood special education classes. "Early Childhood Special Education Settings" are defined as being self-contained special education classes (separate classes), separate facilities, reverse mainstreaming, and itinerant services outside the home. Due to different interpretations of the definitions of settings, these data may not accurately reflect placement options available.

The data presented in Table 2 reflect the individual subgroup settings under the two broad categories of Early Childhood and Early Childhood Special Education Settings. Again, these data may not accurately reflect placement options due to variability in definitions used by local education agencies (LEAs), state operated programs (SOPs), and HeadStart Programs. Both data sets include preschool children with IEPs ages three through five as reported through the December 1 child count data.

Table 1: Preschool Children with IEPs by Setting

Placement/LRE	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Early Childhood Settings (including early childhood class, home, and part-time early childhood class/part-time early childhood special education class)	6000	5601	4595	3970
Early Childhood Special Education Settings (including separate facilities, reverse mainstreaming, and itinerant services outside the home)	5013	5900	7223	7698
Total Preschool Children with IEPs	11013	11501	11818	11668
Total Percentage of Preschool Children who received special education services in settings with typically developing peers	54.48106%	48.70011%	38.88136%	34.02468%

Table 2: Preschool Children with IEPs by Subgroup Settings

Setting/LRE	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Early Childhood Class	35.70325 %	27.44109 %	20.72262 %	17.26945 %
Home	2.38808 %	1.72158 %	0.77847 %	0.52279 %
Part-time Early Childhood Class/Part-time Special Education Class	12.29456 %	13.23363 %	17.38026 %	16.23243 %
Early Childhood Special Education Class	15.3909 %	16.95504 %	19.23337 %	23.27733 %
Itinerant Services Outside the Home	29.18369 %	33.5536 %	40.71754 %	41.14672 %
Residential	Not reported	0.12172 %	0.12692 %	0.16283 %
Reverse Mainstreaming	0.01816 %	0.00869 %	0.12692 %	0.09427 %
Separate School	0.92617 %	0.32171 %	0.91386 %	1.29413 %

Discussion of Baseline Data:

LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs provided data concerning placements in preschool settings through the December 1 count of the 619 data collection. Based upon the definitions given by OSEP, trend data from FY 2001-02 to 2003-04 indicate an overall decrease in the number of preschool children served in the broad category of Early Childhood Settings and an increase in the number of preschool children served in the broad category of Early Childhood Special Education Settings. Some of this variance may be accounted for by the differing setting definitions, and therefore, data should be interpreted with caution. The percentage of preschool children with IEPs who were reported in settings with typically developing peers decreased for the 2001-02 year from approximately 55 percent to 34 percent for the 2004-05 school year.

Trend data over the last three years indicate that overall there has been a decrease in the percent of preschool children receiving special education who are served with typically developing peers. The largest percentage of children (41 percent) received itinerant services outside the home. Trend data indicate that this is an increase from 29 percent over the last three years. Typically this setting is used to serve preschool children who receive services under the category of Speech-Language Impairment. There has been an increase in the percent of children served in an early childhood special education classes and in part-time early childhood class/part-time early childhood special education classes. There have been decreases in the percent of children served in early childhood classes and in the home settings.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Targets
2005 (2005-2006)	Thirty-four percent of preschool children receive special education and related services in settings with typically developing peers.
2006 (2006-2007)	Increase percent of preschool children with disabilities receiving special education and related services in settings with typically developing peers by 5 percent annually.

2007 (2007-2008)	Increase percent of preschool children with disabilities receiving special education and related services in settings with typically developing peers by 5 percent annually.
2008 (2008-2009)	Increase percent of preschool children with disabilities receiving special education and related services in settings with typically developing peers by 5 percent annually.
2009 (2009-2010)	Increase percent of preschool children with disabilities receiving special education and related services in settings with typically developing peers by 5 percent annually.
2010 (2010-2011)	Increase percent of preschool children with disabilities receiving special education and related services in settings with typically developing peers by 5 percent annually.

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

South Carolina will ensure that preschool children with disabilities receive special education and related services in settings with typically developing peers to the maximum extent appropriate. This will be accomplished through the review and revision of existing regulations, policies, procedures, and guidance concerning evaluation, placement, and service provision for this population. These regulations, policies, procedures, and guidance will be grounded in the requirement that the education of children with disabilities, including preschool children with disabilities, must be as close as possible to the child's home so that education occurs in the setting that the child would be in if he/she were not disabled unless the IEP requires some other arrangement.

Professional development will play a key role in increasing opportunities for preschool children with disabilities to be educated in settings with typically developing peers. Technical assistance (TA) will be provided to LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs in the use of evidence-based practices and instruction. This TA will focus on issues such as transition, effective instructional practices, LRE, and effective interventions for preschool children who have or are at risk of developing problem behaviors and academic difficulties.

The OEC will continue collaborating with national and local organizations that promote positive outcomes for preschool children with disabilities. These will include not only service providers for children ages three through five, but also service providers for infants and toddlers in order to promote effective transition for children and their families.

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Revise LRE definitions to parallel those used in the six through twenty-one age group.	December 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff
Continue to collect, analyze, and publish LRE data through the 619 data report annually.	December 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff LEA, SOP, and HeadStart staff National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM)
Develop regulations and policies:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Board of Education (SBE) regulations based on IDEA '04. 	June 30, 2006 or no later than six month following the issuance of the federal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Regulations National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) OEC Leadership team Stakeholders including parents, LEA, SOP, and HeadStart staff Institutions of higher education (IHE) staff Parent advocacy and advisory groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance document concerning evaluation, placement, IEP development, LRE considerations, and early childhood transition. 	May 2006 to December 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff BabyNet staff IHE staff Stakeholders including parents, LEA, SOP, and HeadStart staff Parent advocacy and advisory groups
Identify programs in LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs that have increased the percent of preschool children with disabilities being educated in settings with typically developing peers (exemplar schools).	January 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff IHE staff Stakeholders including parents, LEA, SOP, and HeadStart staff
Develop an evaluation method to identify systemic issues and single instances of noncompliance in the area of preschool LRE (see Indicator 15 for details concerning the focused monitoring process).	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM) OEC Leadership team Stakeholders
Design self-assessment process to assist LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs in analyzing identification and LRE data and planning improvements.	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC Leadership team LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart program stakeholders NCSEAM Mid South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC)

Program /Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Provide professional development to train LEA, SOP, and HeadStart staff in the use of the revised LRE definitions.	January 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • LEA coordinators
Provide professional development concerning how IEP teams make decisions concerning LRE.	July 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHE staff • Office of Early Childhood Education staff • Exemplar schools
Provide professional development concerning the use of best practices in evidence-based instruction of preschool children with disabilities in settings with typically developing peers in best practices for instruction through the annual Research to Practice Institute.	July 2006 and annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHE staff • Office of Early Childhood Education staff • National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center • Center for Evidence-based Practices: Young Children with Challenging Behavior • Exemplar schools
Provide professional development to assist LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs in building capacity in the area of prevention and intervention.	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • Office of Early Childhood Education • Office of Curriculum and Instruction • Office of School Leadership • Office of School Quality • IHE staff
Coordinate professional development activities and technical assistance through the Preschool Technical Assistance Grant.	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • College of Education at the University of South Carolina staff • Office of Early Childhood Education staff • First Steps staff • LEA, SOP, and HeadStart providers
Provide professional develop to assist LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart staff in using a problem solving approach to identify barriers to serving preschool children with disabilities in settings with typically developing peers and in finding methods to successfully increase opportunities for integrated instruction.	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preschool Technical Assistance Grant • State Improvement Grant • South Carolina Speech-Language Hearing Association • OEC staff • Office of Early Childhood Education staff • IHE staff

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Indicator 7 – Percent of preschool children with IEPs who demonstrate improved:

- A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy); and
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Measurement:

- a. Percent of preschool children who reach or maintain functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers = # of preschool children who reach or maintain functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers divided by # of preschool children with IEPs assessed times 100.
- b. Percent of preschool children who improve functioning = # of preschool children who improved functioning divided by # of preschool children with IEPs assessed times 100.
- c. Percent of preschool children who did not improve functioning = # of preschool children who did not improve functioning divided by # of preschool children with IEPs assessed times 100.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

South Carolina will ensure that preschool children with individual education programs (IEPs) will demonstrate improved positive social/emotional skills (including social relationships), acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy), and use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs at levels commensurate with same-aged peers. The goal of quality early intervention is to assist preschool children with disabilities in acquiring the skills necessary to be active and successful participants in kindergarten and first grade classrooms and to minimize the developmental delays experienced by these children. Although the purpose of intervention is to produce better developmental outcomes than would be expected without intervention, for some children with more severe disabilities and delays, these services might only ameliorate the delays and will not result in their achieving functional levels completely commensurate with peers.

Traditionally, South Carolina has served preschool children with sensory impairments. In 1986 with the passing of Public Law 99-457, eligibility criteria for the category of preschool children with disabilities (PCD) were established. These criteria were reviewed and revised when the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was passed in 1997. Current eligibility criteria for services to three, four, and five year olds are described under the categories of speech-language impairment, other health impairment, orthopedic impairment, deaf or hard of hearing, visual impairment, autism, deaf-blind, multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injury, or PCD. Specific eligibility criteria under the PCD category include the following:

- a. The child's scores on a standardized norm-referenced test are at least two standard deviations below the mean in one or more of the following five areas: cognition, communication, motor, activities of daily living, or social/emotional development (the child's scores in the area of social/emotional development will be two or more standard deviations discrepant from the mean in a maladaptive direction); or
- b. The child's scores on a standardized norm-referenced test are at least one and one-half standard deviations below the mean in two or more of the following five areas: cognition, communication, motor, activities of daily living, or social/emotional development (the child's scores in the area of social/emotional development will be one and one-half standard deviations discrepant from the mean in a maladaptive direction).

Children who receive services under the PCD category must be reevaluated prior to their sixth birthdays in order to determine eligibility and need under another category of disability. Children who receive services under one of the other nine categories are reevaluated at least every three years. This may or may not occur prior to age six, depending upon when the child was initially placed.

Programs for preschool children with disabilities serve children ranging from those who have short-term, mild delays in one domain to those who have extremely serious, long-term developmental and health needs in multiple domains. Traditionally, entry data collected on preschool children depended on the unique needs identified by the evaluation team and on the disability or delay. Progress was monitored on areas of need only; exit data has been inconsistently available for children ages three, four, and five due to the various options for categorical service (speech-language impairment, other health impairment, orthopedic impairment, etc.) Overall progress in attaining skills necessary for success in kindergarten and first grade was not assessed. This has been due in part to the diverse levels of functioning across the five domains that are served in preschool programs. It is also due in part to the varied reevaluation dates based on dates of placement in the nine categories other than PCD.

Another issue is one of assessment. It is often difficult to accurately assess young children. Differing instructional and assessment philosophies concerning this population also contribute at times to a lack of assessment information on normally developing peers. Comparisons have been difficult with normally developing peers and even with preschool children with similar developmental needs due to the variety of assessment methods used by individualized education program (IEP) teams. Attempts have been made to survey districts to determine what methods are used for assessment in the domains of social-emotional skills (including social relationships); acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy); and use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs. There has not been a readily available method to compare results of different assessments.

Another aspect of this issue involves the lack of certification requirements for this disability category. At the present time, a teacher in a PCD program could possess certification in any area of special education or in early childhood education. There are no coursework requirements specific to preschool children with developmental delays or disabilities. There has been discussion with the SCSDE Office of Teacher Certification regarding this issue as well as with institutions of higher education (IHE).

Baseline Data:

While no baseline data are available at this time, the process establishing the baseline has been developed. Districts will be given guidance in the selection of appropriate progress monitoring assessments. A rubric of benchmarks will be utilized to assist in comparing progress of preschool children with disabilities to their same-aged peers. Initially entry and exit criteria (pre- and post-assessment) will be used to indicate progress toward expected outcomes. Baseline

data for entry will be collected from multiple sources during the 2006-07 school year in a representative sample of school districts throughout the state. All children who are determined eligible for services under the PCD category in these districts on and after August 1, 2006 will be assessed in the three outcome areas. These assessments are to be completed within two months of the child's entry into the program. Evaluation teams may choose to include these assessments of the outcome areas in the initial evaluation for eligibility. During the 2007-08 school year another sample of districts will begin data collection. This process will continue through the 2010-11 school year so that all districts will have been sampled. Exit data will be collected prior to each child's sixth birthday for all children who are enrolled in the PCD program for at least six months. The reevaluation team may include this exit assessment in the reevaluation plan. The data for each child will be coordinated using the Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF) developed by the Early Childhood Outcomes Center (ECO) to assess progress toward outcomes. Data will be reported by each district at the end of each school year using the goal attainment scaling of the COSF.

Baseline Data for FFY 2005 (2005-2006):

The FFY '05 APR, submitted in spring 2007, will provide the 2005-2006 baseline data for Indicator #8. Measurable and rigorous targets will be determined and activities will be outlined to meet future targets.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	Since this is a new indicator, measurable and rigorous targets will be provided in FFY 2005 APR due February 1, 2007.
2006 (2006-2007)	
2007 (2007-2008)	
2008 (2008-2009)	
2009 (2009-2010)	
2010 (2010-2011)	

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

South Carolina will insure that preschool children ages three through five will obtain the skills necessary to participate as actively and successfully as possible in the general education kindergarten and first grade settings. The focus will be on improving outcomes in the domains of social/emotional skills, the acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and the use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs. This process will entail review and revision of existing

regulations, policies, and procedures concerning teacher certification and program entry and exit criteria; development of additional regulations, policies, and procedures concerning improving outcomes across the three targeted domains and comparison with normally developing peers; and development of a progress monitoring/outcome evaluation system.

The Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) will work with other offices within the SCSDE and with IHE to review and revise the existing certification and training requirements for this area. This work group will recommend coursework that would be needed by teachers in the area of preschool children with disabilities.

The OEC will provide guidance and technical assistance in the review and revision of existing regulations regarding eligibility for services. This process will also include the review of assessment techniques used to determine skill levels in cognitive, communication, motor, activities of daily living, or social/emotional development. A technical assistance guide will be developed to assist evaluation and IEP teams in choosing assessment methods that would provide information to be used for the determination of eligibility and need for special education services, for the monitoring of progress in the three domains, and for the development of exit criteria. Professional development in the use of these assessment techniques as well as the use of data to inform instruction and improve outcomes will also be provided. The Child Outcomes Summary Form developed by the Early Childhood Outcomes Center will be utilized to assist in monitoring the progress in the three outcome domains. LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart Programs will incorporate this goal attainment process into their self-assessment process.

The OEC will also continue discussion with its Part C counterparts at BabyNet concerning collaboration in data management and sharing, transition, and professional development. Professional development opportunities will be extended to Part C stakeholders as appropriate.

Additional professional development and technical assistance concerning effective, evidence-based instruction and interventions in the three outcome areas will be provided utilizing OEC staff, SCSDE Office of Early Childhood staff, IHE staff, and other appropriate professionals. A partnership grant with staff at the University of South Carolina will provide an avenue to develop a technical assistance guide with coordinated professional development specifically in the area of evidence-based instruction for preschool children with challenging behaviors.

Progress toward outcomes will be reported in the three categories of reaching or maintaining skills at a level comparable to same-aged peers, improving skill levels, and lack of improvement. All three categories will include both a reflection of the individual child's growth as well as a comparison to same-aged peers. Progress will be assessed through the OEC's focused monitoring process using a self-assessment to be completed at the district level as well as reporting to the OEC through the annual data collection system.

Specific activities and timelines will be developed when data are available to inform decisions concerning the need for more targeted assistance.

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Indicator – 8: Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities.

Measurement:

Percent = # of respondent parents who report schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities divided by the total # of respondent parents of children with disabilities times 100.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

South Carolina will ensure parents are involved in the process of developing and implementing special education services for their children. Parent involvement is an integral part of improving results for students with disabilities. When parents are involved in their children's education and schools facilitate parent involvement, children perform better in school. Students with disabilities often require a special relationship with their parents and educators to ensure and encourage positive academic, functional, and social outcomes.

Our state has made several attempts at assessing parent involvement. Through a General Supervision Enhancement Grant (GSEG), our state conducted a study entitled "Family Involvement and Special Education: A Survey of South Carolina's Caregivers with Children in Special Education." The survey was administered to 453 caregivers with children enrolled in special education. The purpose of the study was to provide a baseline on the level of family involvement of caregivers with children in special education. Data was collected through telephone surveys of randomly selected households in South Carolina during April 2004. The survey was conducted in 31 local education agencies (LEAs). Of the respondent caregivers, 76% reported involvement in working with the school to develop or change their child's IEP.

In the summer of 2005, the state collected data from LEAs concerning the percentage of parents participating in IEP annual reviews. Data were reported via a survey but not through a mandated system of data collection. Approximately half of the LEAs reported data, but these data were reported differently. Some LEAs reported parent participation by school, others by the LEA. An initial analysis of the data indicated that LEAs reported a parent participation rate of approximately 60% in annual IEP meetings. The findings suggested a defined data collection system is needed.

In 2004-2005, the state included parents in its focused monitoring process and will continue to include parents in this process. Staff from the state's parent training center participated in the focused monitoring process by conducting interviews with parents of students with disabilities. As part of the focused monitoring process, parents were asked a series of questions designed to assess how schools involved them.

In July 2005, the OEC hired a full-time ombudsman to facilitate and ensure parent access to information and assistance. In September 2005, the state obtained input from its Advisory Council as well as other stakeholders regarding improvement activities for parent involvement.

The OEC provides funding, training, and on-going technical assistance to its parent-training center, Pro-Parents. Pro-Parents has four regional offices and serves parents in all 85 LEAs. The offices are staffed by parents of a student with disability. These offices provide information and training to parents (including foster parents), families, and educators in the LEAs.

To fulfill the requirements of this indicator, parents of students with disabilities will be surveyed annually to determine if they perceive that schools facilitate parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities. Sampling will be conducted in a predetermined number of school districts and charter schools each year, using the monitoring cohorts, based upon LEA location and size, so that the State will annually collect data on at least one sixth of its districts/agencies and all districts with an average daily membership of 50,000 or greater. Parents from the selected school districts will be chosen using a stratified random sampling methodology, with a resultant sample representative of the state's special education population.

The survey instrument will be the survey developed by the National Center for Special Education Accountability and Monitoring (NCSEAM). The parent survey will provide data for this indicator, and will also serve as an additional data source regarding parental input and participation for the state's monitoring process. The state will partner with Pro-Parents and the State Advisory Council for Students with Disabilities to review the results of the survey and LEA data concerning the percentage of parents participating in IEP annual review meetings.

The OEC will investigate the implementation of a phone call tracking system similar to the one in use by Pro-Parents. This will enable the OEC to identify trends in calls coming into the office. The OEC will also track parent involvement in the dispute resolution process.

Baseline Data for FFY 2005 (2005-2006):

The FFY '05 APR, submitted in spring 2007, will provide the 2005-2006 baseline data for Indicator 8. Measurable and rigorous targets will be determined and activities will be outlined to meet future targets.

Discussion of Baseline Data:

Since this is a new indicator, discussion of the baseline data will be provided in FFY 2005 APR due February 1, 2007.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	Since this is a new indicator, measurable and rigorous targets will be provided in FYY 2005 APR due February 1, 2007.
2006 (2006-2007)	
2007 (2007-2008)	
2008 (2008-2009)	
2009 (2009-2010)	
2010 (2010-2011)	

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Additional improvement activities will be developed once baseline has been established.

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Select parent survey and mode of administration.	January 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • NCSEAM • MSRRC • Pro-Parents
Complete sampling plan.	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • NCSEAM • MSRRC
Administer parent survey.	May-June 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • NCSEAM
Collect, record, and aggregate data from parent survey.	June-July 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC Staff • NCSEAM • MSRRC
Compare data collected to sampling plan to ensure adequate sample size.	July 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC Staff • NCSEAM • MSRRC
Analyze data.	July 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • Pro-Parents
Set six year and annual rigorous and measurable targets based on baseline data collected to data (to be submitted in the APR due February 2007.)	Before February 1, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC Staff • State Advisory Council
Report data analysis results to LEAs.	Annually in the fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC
Develop a data collection system to track phone calls, emails, and other communications with the OEC to track information and assistance requests.	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • Pro-Parents • SCSDE Office of Technology
Track parent involvement in the dispute data collection system and review federal monitoring procedures and dispute resolution data to determine how to use data to measure progress with targets for parent involvement.	June 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Train state office personnel to administer survey, based on sampling plan, and record resultant data.	April-May 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC
Maintain a network of representatives from the parent training center, advocacy organizations, and state agencies to identify training needs for parents and conduct training collaboratively.	November 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • Pro-Parents • Family Connections
Provide regular training and information for parent training center.	November 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • Pro-Parents

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Indicator 9 – Percent of districts that report disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification.

Measurement: Percent = # of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification divided by # of districts in the state times 100.

Include the state's definition of "disproportionate representation."

Describe how the state determined the disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services was the result of inappropriate identification, e.g., monitoring data, review of policies, practices, and procedures under 618(d), etc.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

The Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) of the South Carolina State Department of Education (SCSDE) must ensure that students who are identified as having a disability and needing special education are appropriately identified so as to be proportionate by race/ethnicity to the state's general education student enrollment. The OEC will reduce the percent of districts that report disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services resulting from inappropriate identification to zero percent (0%).

Historically, the OEC has addressed this issue by reviewing and revising policies, procedures, and practices pertaining to the identification of students with disabilities to ensure that local education agencies (LEAs) are providing comprehensive evaluations conducted by a multidisciplinary team using a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant information that would identify the student's educational needs as well as his/her present levels of academic achievement, related developmental needs, and functional performance. This review was conducted to also ensure that LEAs were using assessments and other evaluation materials that were selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis. Materials must be provided and administered in the student's native language or preferred mode of communication unless it is clearly unfeasible to use that language or mode of communication. Materials and procedures used to assess a student with limited English proficiency must be selected and administered to ensure that they measure the extent to which the student has a disability and needs special education, rather than measuring the student's English language skills. The determination of eligibility may not be based solely on any single measure or assessment or due to a lack of instruction in reading or math or to limited English proficiency.

In 2000 the eligibility criteria for the category of mental disabilities were redefined so as to include an emphasis on adaptive behavior information and parent input. In April of 2002, the SCSDE entered into a partnership agreement with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR). The

purpose of the agreement was the reduction of disproportionate representation. Initiatives were developed to assist and support districts in addressing this issue.

As part of the OCR agreement, the OEC developed a monitoring component that required districts to submit data annually concerning newly identified students in the category of mild mental disabilities. The data include assessment data and information used by the evaluation team to determine eligibility. OEC staff review the data and provide feedback to districts regarding identification rates, appropriate use of eligibility criteria, and least restrictive environment (LRE) placements. The OEC looks at trends over the past three school years.

In 2003 and 2004 the OEC provided LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs with district data reports concerning LRE, placements per category, and disproportionate representation. Professional development was provided in data analysis and the use of data to inform decision-making.

Professional development has been offered both regionally and within specific districts to provide technical assistance concerning appropriate assessment techniques, interpretation of eligibility criteria, and importance of parental involvement. The South Carolina State Improvement Grant (SIG) has coordinated professional development in 19 districts to promote positive behavior supports using a schoolwide model. Opportunities have also been made available to these schools for reading interventions and the Strategic Instruction Model (SIM). The summer Research to Practice Institutes have provided technical assistance for school leadership teams, teachers, school psychologists, administrators, other professionals, and parents concerning best practices.

Determination of Baseline Data:

Using the electronic spreadsheet developed by Westat, South Carolina will calculate the weighted risk ratios in special education as applied to the five race/ethnic groups. This weighted risk ratio directly compares the relative size of two risks by dividing the risk for a specific racial/ethnic group by the risk for a comparison group. This determines the specific race/ethnic group's risk of being identified as having a disability as compared to the risk for all other students. South Carolina will provide intensive technical assistance to LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs with a weighted risk ratio of 2.0 or higher for any race/ethnic group in special education.

South Carolina will use FY 04 (December 1, 2005) 618 data to determine if disproportionate representation is present in the state. Districts will be ranked for targeted assistance based on the magnitude of the risk ratios.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	Baseline data to be collected; weighted risk ratios to be determined based on 618 data; districts ranked according to magnitude of weighted risk ratios.
2006 (2006-2007)	
2007 (2007-2008)	
2008 (2008-2009)	
2009 (2009-2010)	
2010 (2010-2011)	By 2011, the percentage of LEAs in which disproportionate representation in special education is determined to be the result of inappropriate identification will be reduced from x or x% of all LEAs statewide to 0.

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

For those districts identified as having disproportionate representation in special education, the state will incorporate a review process into the focused monitoring framework to determine whether or not the disproportionate representation is the result of inappropriate identification. This focused monitoring process will include a review of district policies, procedures, and practices, a self-assessment to be completed by district personnel as well as on-site folder reviews to be conducted by the OEC used monitoring teams. Additional information to be reviewed during these processes will also include, but will not be limited to the following:

- The continuum of instruction, services, and supports available to students in the general education setting prior to a referral for evaluation to determine eligibility for special education.
- The specific scientifically-based, culturally-competent instructional practices used prior to referral.
- Assessment and progress monitoring procedures designed to measure students' response to intervention prior to referral.
- District referral, evaluation, and eligibility determination policies, procedures, and practices.
- District discipline policies, procedures, and practices as well as instruction, services, and supports available to students prior to and during the disciplinary process.

- District policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that students with disabilities are receiving peer-reviewed, research-based practices in both general and special education settings delivered by highly qualified teachers.

Results of focus groups and interviews with LEA staff, parents, and other stakeholders will be used in conjunction with the OCR and focused monitoring data to triangulate data to identify systemic issues involved in disproportionate representation due to inappropriate identification.

Districts that are determined to have disproportionate representation due to inappropriate identification will be required to reserve and utilize the maximum amount of funds (15%) to provide comprehensive, coordinated early intervening services. With the assistance of the OEC, the LEAs will be required to develop an action plan to address the disproportionate representation. The action plan will be approved by the OEC and must include a three-tiered school-wide approach that provides high quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, frequent progress monitoring to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and application of data to the instructional decision-making process. The process must ensure that evidenced-based interventions and practices are supported by an array of general education support personnel and that general education decisions regarding instruction and interventions are based on the ongoing evaluation of data. These include the development of districtwide and schoolwide leadership teams that utilize a three-tiered problem solving model to identify and address academic and behavioral needs within the district and school. This model promotes the use of schoolwide data to evaluate the core curricula in academic and behavior supports and to implement and evaluate secondary and tertiary interventions. The teams work to collect the data necessary to establish local norms that can be used to assist in the provision of early intervening services that ensure the use of culturally-sensitive, evidence-based interventions.

In Tier 1 of this schoolwide model, the foundational core curricula and organization would utilize evidence-based instructional practices that would meet the academic and behavioral needs of the preponderance of students. This core curriculum is provided for all students and would be designed to be preventive and proactive. This proactive approach should include universal screenings to assist the leadership team in identifying levels of proficiency in academic and behavioral areas and strengths and gaps of the core curriculum. The leadership team is then able to make decisions about improvements needed in the core curriculum and about students who need further intervention.

In Tier 2 of the model, supplemental interventions/instruction are provided to the students who do not respond to the core curriculum. This additional instruction is provided following functional, diagnostic assessments to determine specific skill deficits. Instruction is provided in a flexible small group setting. Progress is monitored frequently. When students respond to this supplemental instruction and are able to achieve desired benchmarks, this support is faded. When students do not respond to this supplemental intervention, they may need more intensive interventions provided in Tier 3.

Tier 3 includes ongoing, intensive instructional interventions to accelerate learning. In this tier, interventions will likely be long-term, very individualized, and may include the consideration/determination of eligibility for special education services.

This three-tiered model integrates general, remedial, and special education to focus on outcomes for students at the state, district, and school levels. The OEC will assist with training, capacity building, and support for all involved. Resources will be identified through the State Improvement Grant to include staff from institutions of higher education (IHEs), district and school level coaches, and staff from the SCSDE.

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Develop an evaluation method to identify systemic issues and single instances of noncompliance in the area of disproportionate representation in the six categories of disability (see Indicator 15 for details concerning the focused monitoring process).	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM) OEC Leadership team Stakeholders
Design self-assessment process to assist LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs in analyzing identification and LRE data and planning improvements.	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC Leadership team LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart program stakeholders NCSEAM Mid South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC)
Implement self-assessment instrument for LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs and review annually.	February 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC Leadership team LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart program leadership teams
Develop regulations and policies:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Board of Education (SBE) regulations based on IDEA '04. 	June 30, 2006 or no later than six month following the issuance of the federal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Regulations National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) OEC Leadership team Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and revise existing eligibility criteria to ensure that students are being identified appropriately as having a disability and as needing special education. 	June 30, 2006 or no later than six month following the issuance of the federal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Regulations National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) OEC Leadership team Stakeholders
Require LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs that are determined to have disproportionate representation due to inappropriate identification to reserve and utilize the maximum amount of funds to provide comprehensive, coordinated early intervening services.	December 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff Office of School Quality Office of School Leadership Office of Curriculum and Instruction District strategic planning teams

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Provide professional development to enhance awareness of appropriate identification of students with disabilities to include use of culturally competent assessment practices.	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHE staff
Provide professional development to address the issues of disproportionate representation through a problem solving model.	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHE staff • Office of School Leadership • Exemplar SIG schools
Provide professional development to address the issues of disproportionate representation through the self-assessment process. (See Indicator 15 for details)	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • NCSEAM • MSRRRC
Provide professional development to address the issues of disproportionate representation in best practices for instruction through the annual Research to Practice Institute.	July 2006 and annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIG and OEC staff • IHE staff • Exemplar SIG schools
Provide professional development to assist LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs in building capacity in the area of prevention and intervention.	January 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • Office of Curriculum and Instruction • Office of School Leadership • Office of School Quality • IHE staff

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Indicator 10—Percent of districts that report disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in the six categories of disability that is the result of inappropriate identification.

Measurement:

Percent = # of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in the six categories of disability that is the result of inappropriate identification divided by # of districts in the state times 100.

Include the state's definition of "disproportionate representation."

Describe how the state determined the disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in the six categories of disability was the result of inappropriate identification, e.g., monitoring data, review of policies, practices, and procedures under 618(d), etc.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

The Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) of the South Carolina State Department of Education (SCSDE) must ensure that students who are identified as having a disability and needing special education and related services are appropriately identified so as to be proportionate by race/ethnicity to the state's general education student enrollment. The OEC will reduce the percent of districts that report disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in the six categories of disability (learning disabilities, mental disabilities, emotional disabilities, other health impairments, speech or language impairments, and autism) resulting from inappropriate identification to zero percent (0%).

Historically, the OEC has addressed this issue by reviewing and revising policies, procedures, and practices pertaining to the identification of students with disabilities to ensure that local education agencies (LEAs) are providing comprehensive evaluations conducted by a multidisciplinary team using a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant information that would identify the student's educational needs as well as his/her present levels of academic achievement, related developmental needs, and functional performance. This review was conducted to also ensure that LEAs were using assessments and other evaluation materials that were selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis. Materials must be provided and administered in the student's native language or preferred mode of communication unless it is clearly unfeasible to use that language or mode of communication. Materials and procedures used to assess a student with limited English proficiency must be selected and administered to ensure that they measure the extent to which the student has a disability and needs special education, rather than measuring the student's English language skills. The determination of eligibility may not be based solely on any single measure or assessment or due to a lack of instruction in reading or math or to limited English proficiency.

In 2000 the eligibility criteria for the category of mental disabilities were redefined so as to include an emphasis on adaptive behavior information and parent input. In April of 2002, the SCSDE entered into a partnership agreement with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR). The purpose of the agreement was the reduction of disproportionality. Initiatives were developed to assist and support districts in addressing this issue.

Also as part of the OCR agreement, the OEC developed a monitoring component that required districts to submit data annually concerning newly identified students in the category of mild mental disabilities. The data include assessment data and information used by the evaluation team to determine eligibility. OEC staff review the data and provide feedback to districts regarding identification rates, appropriate use of eligibility criteria, and least restrictive environment (LRE) placements. The OEC looks at trends over the past three school years.

In 2003 and 2004 the OEC provided LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs with district data reports concerning LRE, placements per category, and disproportionate representation. Professional development was provided in data analysis and the use of data to inform the decision-making.

Professional development has been offered both regionally and within specific districts to provide technical assistance concerning appropriate assessment techniques, interpretation of eligibility criteria, and importance of parental involvement. The South Carolina State Improvement Grant (SIG) has coordinated professional development in 19 districts to promote positive behavior supports using a schoolwide model. Opportunities have also been made available to these schools for reading interventions and the Strategic Instruction Model (SIM). The summer Research to Practice Institutes have provided technical assistance for school leadership teams, teachers, school psychologists, administrators, other professionals, and parents concerning best practices.

Determination of Baseline Data:

Using the electronic spreadsheet developed by Westat, South Carolina will calculate the weighted risk ratios for the state as applied to the five race/ethnic groups in the six categories of disability. This weighted risk ratio directly compares the relative size of two risks by dividing the risk for a specific racial/ethnic group by the risk for a comparison group. This determines the specific race/ethnic group's risk of being identified as having a disability as compared to the risk for all other students. South Carolina will provide intensive technical assistance to LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs with a weighted risk ratio of 2.0 or higher for any race/ethnic group, in the six categories of disability.

South Carolina will use FFY '04 (December 1, 2004) 618 data to determine if disproportionate representation is present in the state. Districts will be ranked based on the magnitude of the risk ratios in the six categories of disability.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	Baseline data to be collected; weighted risk ratios to be determined based on 618 data; districts ranked according to magnitude of weighted risk ratios.
2006 (2006-2007)	
2007 (2007-2008)	
2008 (2008-2009)	
2009 (2009-2010)	
2010 (2010-2011)	By 2011, the percentage of LEAs in which disproportionality in the six categories of disability is determined to be the result of inappropriate identification will be reduced from x or x% of all LEAs statewide to 0.

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

For those districts identified as having disproportionate representation in the six categories of disability, the state will incorporate a review process into the focused monitoring framework to determine whether or not the disproportionate representation is the result of inappropriate identification. This focused monitoring process will include a review of district policies, procedures, and practices, a self-assessment to be completed by district personnel as well as on-site folder reviews to be conducted by the OEC focused monitoring teams. Additional information to be reviewed during these processes will also include, but will not be limited to the following:

- The continuum of instruction, services, and supports available to students in the general education setting prior to a referral for evaluation to determine eligibility for special education.
- The specific scientifically based, culturally competent instructional practices used prior to referral.
- Assessment and progress monitoring procedures designed to measure students' response to intervention prior to referral.
- District referral, evaluation, and eligibility determination policies, procedures, and practices.
- District discipline policies, procedures, and practices as well as instruction, services, and supports available to students prior to and during the disciplinary process.

- District policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that students with disabilities are receiving peer-review, research-based practices in both general and special education settings delivered by highly qualified teachers.

Results of focus groups and interviews with LEA staff, parents, and other stakeholders will be used in conjunction with the OCR and focused monitoring data to triangulate data to identify systemic issues involved in disproportionality due to inappropriate identification.

LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs that are determined to have disproportionate representation due to inappropriate identification will be required to reserve and utilize the maximum amount of funds to provide comprehensive, coordinated early intervening services. With the assistance of the OEC, the LEAs will be required to develop an action plan to address the disproportionality. The action plan will be approved by the OEC and must include a three-tiered approach that provides high quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, frequent progress monitoring to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and application of data to the instructional decision making process. The process must ensure that evidenced-based interventions and practices are supported by an array of general education support personnel and that general education decisions regarding instruction and interventions are based on the ongoing evaluation of data. These include the development of districtwide and schoolwide leadership teams that utilize a three-tiered problem solving model to identify and address academic and behavioral needs within the district and school. This model promotes the use of schoolwide data to evaluate the core curricula in academic and behavior supports and to implement and evaluate secondary and tertiary interventions. The teams work to collect the data necessary to establish local norms that can be used to assist in the provision of early intervening services that ensure the use of culturally-sensitive, evidence-based interventions.

In Tier 1 of this schoolwide model, the foundational core curricula and organization would utilize evidence based instructional practices that would meet the academic and behavioral needs of the preponderance of students. This core curriculum is provided for all students and would be designed to be preventive and proactive. This proactive approach should include universal screenings to assist the leadership team in identifying levels of proficiency in academic and behavioral areas and strengths and gaps of the core curriculum. The leadership team is then able to make decisions about improvements needed in the core curriculum and about students need further intervention.

In Tier 2 of the model, supplemental interventions/instruction are provided to the students who do not respond to the core curriculum. This additional instruction is provided following functional, diagnostic assessments to determine specific skill deficits. Instruction is provided in a flexible small group setting. Progress is monitored frequently. When students respond to this supplemental instruction and are able to achieve desired benchmarks, this support is faded. When students do not respond to this supplemental intervention, they may need more intensive interventions provided in Tier 3.

Tier 3 includes ongoing, intensive instructional interventions to accelerate learning. In this tier, interventions will likely be long-term, very individualized, and may include the consideration/determination of eligibility for special education services.

This three-tiered model integrates general, remedial, and special education to focus on outcomes for students at the state, district, and school levels. The OEC will assist with training, capacity building, and support for all involved. Resources will be identified through the State Improvement Grant to include staff from institutions of higher education (IHEs), district and school level coaches, and staff from the SCSDE.

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Develop an evaluation method to identify systemic issues and single instances of noncompliance in the area of disproportionality in the six categories of disability (see Indicator 15 for details concerning the focused monitoring process).	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM) OEC Leadership team Stakeholders
Design self-assessment process to assist LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs in analyzing identification and LRE data and planning improvements.	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC Leadership team LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart program stakeholders NCSEAM Mid South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC)
Implement self-assessment instrument for LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs and review annually.	February 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC Leadership team LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart program leadership teams
Develop regulations and policies:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Board of Education (SBE) regulations based on IDEA '04. 	June 30, 2006 or no later than six month following the issuance of the federal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Regulations National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) OEC Leadership team Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and revise existing eligibility criteria to ensure that students are being identified appropriately as having a disability and as needing special education. 	June 30, 2006 or no later than six month following the issuance of the federal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Regulations National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) OEC Leadership team Stakeholders
Require LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs that are determined to have disproportionate representation due to inappropriate identification to reserve and utilize the maximum amount of funds to provide comprehensive, coordinated early intervening services.	November 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff Office of School Quality Office of School Leadership Office of Curriculum and Instruction District strategic planning teams

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Provide professional development to enhance awareness of appropriate identification of students with disabilities to include use of culturally competent assessment practices.	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHE staff
Provide professional development to address the issues of disproportionate representation through a problem solving model.	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHE staff • Office of School Leadership • Exemplar SIG schools
Provide professional development to address the issues of disproportionate representation through the self-assessment process. (See Indicator 15 for details)	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • NCSEAM • MSRRC
Provide professional development to address the issues of disproportionate representation in best practices for instruction through the annual Research to Practice Institute.	July 2006 and annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIG and OEC staff • IHE staff • Exemplar SIG schools
Provide professional development to assist LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs in building capacity in the area of prevention and intervention.	January 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • Office of Curriculum and Instruction • Office of School Leadership • Office of School Quality • IHE staff

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision/Child Find

Indicator #11: Percent of children with parental consent to evaluate who were evaluated and eligibility determined within 60 calendar days.

Measurement:

- a. # of children for whom parental consent to evaluate was received.
- b. # determined not eligible whose evaluations and eligibility determinations were completed within 60 calendar days.
- c. # determined eligible whose evaluations and eligibility determinations were completed within 60 calendar days.

Account for children included **a**, but not included in **b** or **c**. Indicate the range of days beyond the timeline when eligibility was determined and any reasons for the delays .

Percent = $(b + c) / a \times 100$

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

Federal Regulation 34 CRF Parts 300 and 303 require that the Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) of the South Carolina State Department of Education (SCSDE) ensure that local education agencies (LEAs), state operated programs (SOPs), or HeadStart programs conduct a full and individual initial evaluation before the initial provision of special education and related services to a child with a disability. In conducting the evaluation, the LEAs, SOPs, or HeadStart programs shall use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information. Upon completion of the administration of assessments and other evaluation measures, the determination of whether the child is a child with a disability and the educational needs of the child shall be made by a team of qualified professionals and the parent of the child. The OEC will ensure that all students with parental consent to evaluate were evaluated and had an eligibility determination made within sixty days.

The OEC must ensure that within a reasonable period of time following the receipt of parent consent to an initial evaluation the student is evaluated by the LEA, SOP, or HeadStart program. South Carolina state regulations and policies define “a reasonable period of time” as being within sixty calendar days following the school district/agency’s receipt of parent consent to an initial evaluation. For students initially entering programs of special education and related services, the eligibility determination/individualized education program (IEP) development/placement determination meeting must also be completed within this sixty calendar days. Historically monitoring trends have indicated that completion of initial evaluations within these specified timelines has been an area of noncompliance for school districts/agencies. Although OEC monitors have looked at evaluation timelines during monitoring visits, the OEC has not required school districts/agencies to collect or report data concerning evaluation timelines.

Determination of Baseline Data:

The OEC will require school districts/agencies to collect and report data concerning initial evaluation, eligibility determination, and IEP development beginning with the 2005-06 school year. This information will be submitted electronically on or before June 30, 2006. This data will be reviewed to determine percentage of district/agencies that are meeting the required evaluation timelines.

Discussion of Baseline Data:

Since this is a new indicator, baseline data will be provided in FFY 2005 APR due February 1, 2007.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	Baseline data to be collected.
2006 (2006-2007)	One hundred percent of children with parental consent to evaluate, who were evaluated and eligibility determined within 60 calendar days.
2007 (2007-2008)	
2008 (2008-2009)	
2009 (2009-2010)	
2010 (2010-2011)	

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

The OEC will coordinate the review and revision of state regulations to ensure alignment with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act '04. This will include the provision of a specified timeline for evaluation, eligibility determination, and IEP development within sixty days. LEAs, SOPS, and HeadStart programs will be required to review and revise their policies and procedures to ensure that these are also aligned with current state and federal regulations.

The OEC will incorporate additional data collection requirements into the focused monitoring procedures. These will include LEA, SOP, and HeadStart program reporting of evaluation timeline information.

For those districts identified as not meeting timelines for initial evaluation/eligibility determination/IEP development, the state will incorporate a review process into the focused monitoring framework to determine reasons for noncompliance. This focused monitoring process will include a review of district policies, procedures, and practices, a self-assessment to be completed by district personnel as well as on-site folder reviews to be conducted by the SEA

focused monitoring teams. Additional information to be reviewed during these processes will also include, but will not be limited to the following:

- The continuum of instruction, services, and supports available to students in the general education setting prior to a referral for evaluation to determine eligibility for special education.
- The specific scientifically-based, culturally-competent instructional practices used prior to referral.
- Assessment and progress monitoring procedures designed to measure students' response to intervention prior to referral.
- District referral, evaluation, and eligibility determination policies, procedures, and practices.

Additional improvement activities will be developed following the establishment of the baseline.

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Develop an evaluation method to identify systemic issues and single instances of noncompliance in the area of evaluation timelines (see Indicator 15 for details concerning the focused monitoring process).	February 20/06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM) • OEC Leadership team • Stakeholders
Design self-assessment process to assist LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs in analyzing evaluation timeline data and planning improvements.	February 20/06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC Leadership team • LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart program stakeholders • NCSEAM • Mid South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC)
Implement self-assessment instrument for LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs and review annually.	February 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC Leadership team • LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart program leadership teams
Develop regulations and policies:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Board of Education (SBE) regulations based on IDEA 04. 	June 30, 2006 or no later than six month following the issuance of the federal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Regulations • National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) • OEC Leadership team • Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and revise existing eligibility criteria to ensure that students are being identified appropriately as having a disability and as needing special education. 	June 30, 2006 or no later than six month following the issuance of the federal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Regulations • National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) • OEC Leadership team • Stakeholders

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Provide professional development to enhance awareness of appropriate identification of students with disabilities to include use of culturally competent assessment practices.	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHE staff
Provide professional development to address the identification of students with disabilities through a problem solving model.	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHE staff • Office of School Leadership • Exemplar SIG schools
Provide professional development to address the issues of evaluation timelines through the self-assessment process. (See Indicator 15 for details)	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • NCSEAM • MSRRC

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision/Effective Transition

Indicator 12 – Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3, who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.

Measurement:

- d. # of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for eligibility determination.
- e. # of those referred determined to be NOT eligible and whose eligibilities were determined prior to their third birthdays.
- f. # of those found eligible who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.

Account for children included in **a** but not included in **b** or **c**. Indicate the range of days beyond the third birthday when eligibility was determined and reasons for the delays.

Percent = **c** divided by **a** minus **b** times 100.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

South Carolina will ensure that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) is available to all children with disabilities beginning at age three and that an individualized education program (IEP) will be in effect on the child's third birthday. If the child's third birthday occurs during the summer, the child's IEP team must determine the date when services under the IEP will begin, based on the individual needs of the child.

The school district must participate in the transition planning conference no later than ninety days prior to the third birthday of a preschool child participating in the BabyNet intervention program. Evaluations conducted by other professionals or agencies within the last six months may be accepted and used in developing the initial IEP. An IEP must be in effect for the child by the third birthday even during summer breaks. If a child's third birthday occurs during the summer, the child's IEP team must determine the date when services under the IEP will begin. A determination must be made by the IEP team with respect to the provision of extended school year (ESY) services. Evaluations may not be delayed for any reason, including through a waiver. Documentation must be maintained to reflect the efforts of the school district/agency with regard to evaluation timelines and subsequent IEP meetings.

Children may be referred for services by a variety of sources. Traditionally referrals are made predominantly by BabyNet and by parents. The referral process through BabyNet begins with the completion of the Transition Notification/Referral form by the BabyNet service coordinator. This form is sent to the LEA representative no later than nine months prior to the child's third birthday. This form documents the parent request or refusal for a referral to the LEA. The form includes the parent request for a referral to the LEA, the request for a transition conference, and the request to forward records. It is up to the LEA representative to contact families to discuss transition options if a parent has refused the referral. Following the evaluation and eligibility

determination process, the LEA completes the form by indicating the outcome of the process and then forwards a copy of the form to BabyNet.

Historically issues have occurred in the areas of timely transition-planning conferences, district attendance at transition-planning conferences, and services in place for children whose birthdays occur during vacation periods. The predominant issue has been communication between the referring agency (BabyNet) and the local education agency (LEA). During their most recent monitoring review, the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), cited the state for not ensuring that children who turned three were always receiving special education and related services by their third birthdays. There is also concern about reasons parents are refusing referrals or services for their children at age three. Reasons for refusal have not been documented by Part C or Part B.

The Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) has collaborated with BabyNet on the design, implementation, and evaluation of a data system (BabyTrac) to facilitate the exchange of information concerning referrals between agencies. Data in this system is entered at the local level by individual BabyNet service coordinators. Data to be logged includes date of referral for the transition planning meeting, the child's birthday, and the exit description. A monthly exiting report is sent by Part C personnel to the OEC. This report includes information about all children exiting the BabyNet system. Problems have occurred because of inaccurate or incomplete reporting of data by and between the districts/agencies as well as differences in reporting requirements. Additional professional development has been provided to both Part B and Part C providers concerning requirements/needs for accurate reporting.

The OEC participates with other agencies and service providers to collaborate with Part C counterparts in facilitating transition between service agencies. An interagency agreement has been developed between Part B and Part C to ensure coordination on transition matters. The Local Interagency Transition Agreement is a written understanding among agencies that participate in transitioning infants, young children and their families. BabyNet Interagency Coordination Teams serve as the forum for the development, implementation, and monitoring of this agreement. The agreement is reviewed, evaluated, and updated at least annually to ensure effectiveness and continuous improvement.

Attempts have been made through the monitoring process to assist districts in ensuring that services are available to preschool children with disabilities beginning at age three. The OEC has provided guidance concerning these requirements and districts have been required to submit corrective action plans and statements of assurance.

Baseline Data for FFY 2004 (2004-2005):

	Children Referred from BabyNet (a)	Children Determined Eligible (c)	Children Determined Not Eligible (b)	Children Where Eligibility Was Not Determined*	c divided by a minus b times 100
Number	655	550	55	36	.9167
Percentage	--	84.62%	8.40%	5.50%	91.67%

*Children Where Eligibility Was Not Determined – no explanation given by BabyNet as to why eligibility was not determined.

Discussion of Baseline Data:

South Carolina developed a collaborative data system (BabyTrac) with BabyNet that was designed to collect data concerning referrals from Part C to Part B as a means to determine percent of children referred prior to age three, found eligible for Part B services, and had IEPs implemented by the child's third birthday. The data received from BabyNet on a quarterly basis reported number of children referred to Part B, number determined eligible, and number determined not eligible. No information was given as to whether or not these determinations were made prior to the child's third birthday or why there were a number of children where eligibility was not determined. The SCSDE has determined that Part B will need to design its own tracking system in order to obtain data concerning referrals to Part B and eligibility determinations prior to third birthdays. This data system will account for children whose eligibility is not determined by their third birthdays, the range of days beyond the third birthday, and reasons for the delays. This data collection system could lead to changes in the 2007 Annual Performance Report.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	One hundred percent of children referred by Part C prior to age three and who are found eligible for Part B will have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.
2006 (2006-2007)	One hundred percent of children referred by Part C prior to age three and who are found eligible for Part B will have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.
2007 (2007-2008)	One hundred percent of children referred by Part C prior to age three and who are found eligible for Part B will have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.
2008 (2008-2009)	One hundred percent of children referred by Part C prior to age three and who are found eligible for Part B will have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.
2009 (2009-2010)	One hundred percent of children referred by Part C prior to age three and who are found eligible for Part B will have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.
2010 (2010-2011)	One hundred percent of children referred by Part C prior to age three and who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

South Carolina will ensure that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) is available to all children with disabilities beginning at age three and that an individualized education program (IEP) will be in effect on the child's third birthday. Improvement activities will focus on review and revision of existing policies and procedures to ensure support of effective transition and services by age three; on the development of an efficient, accurate data collection system; on the review and revision of the focused monitoring process to assist LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs in identifying and correcting systemic issues of noncompliance; and on the provision of professional development concerning effective transition, coordination of services, best practices in instruction, relationship building with parents, and prevention.

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Develop regulations and policies:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Board of Education (SBE) regulations based on IDEA 04. 	June 30, 2006 or no later than six month following the issuance of the federal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Regulations National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) OEC Leadership team Stakeholders including parents, LEA, SOP, and HeadStart staff Institutions of higher education (IHE) staff Parent advocacy and advisory groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance document concerning evaluation, placement, IEP development, LRE considerations, and early childhood transition. 	June 30, 2006 or no later than six month following the issuance of the federal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff BabyNet staff IHE staff Stakeholders including parents, LEA, SOP, and HeadStart staff Parent advocacy and advisory groups
Develop an evaluation method to identify systemic issues and single instances of noncompliance in the area of preschool transition and eligibility by third birthday (see Indicator 15 for details concerning the focused monitoring process).	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM) OEC Leadership team Stakeholders
Design of a self-assessment process to assist LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs in analyzing data collected concerning referrals and determination of eligibility.	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC Leadership team LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart program stakeholders NCSEAM Mid South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC)
Develop a referral and data collection process between BabyNet and LEAs to include reasons for refusal of services.	February 2006 to December 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff BabyNet staff LEA, SOP, and HeadStart staff

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Provide professional development to train LEA, SOP, and HeadStart staff in effective transition.	January 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHE staff • BabyNet staff • Service providers
Provide professional development to assist LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs in building capacity in the area of prevention and intervention.	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • Office of Early Childhood Education • Office of Curriculum and Instruction • Office of School Leadership • Office of School Quality • IHE staff • BabyNet staff
Coordinate professional development activities and technical assistance through the Preschool Technical Assistance Grant.	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • College of Education at the University of South Carolina staff • Office of Early Childhood Education staff • First Steps staff • LEA, SOP, and HeadStart providers
Provide professional development to assist LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart staff in using a problem solving approach to identify barriers to serving preschool children with disabilities in settings with typically developing peers and in finding methods to successfully increase opportunities for integrated instruction.	October 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preschool Technical Assistance Grant • State Improvement Grant • South Carolina Speech-Language Hearing Association • OEC staff • Office of Early Childhood Education staff • IHE staff
Analyze results of NCSEAM survey to determine issues surrounding service provision.	June 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCSEAM • OEC staff • National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center
Provide professional development to LEAs, SOPs, HeadStart programs, Part C service providers, and parents concerning building relationships, coordination of services, and transitions.	June 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • Part C staff • Part C service providers • ProParents and Family Connections

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010**Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision/Effective Transition**

Indicator 13 - Percent of youth aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes coordinated, measurable, annual IEP goals and transition services that will reasonably enable the student to meet the post-secondary goals.

Measurement: Percent = # of youth with disabilities aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes coordinated, measurable, annual IEP goals and transition services that will reasonably enable the student to meet the post-secondary goals divided by # of youth with an IEP age 16 and above times 100.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA '04) requires that all students' individualized education programs (IEP) include transition planning by age 16 or earlier if appropriate. This plan should reflect students' interests and preferences, current accomplishments and skills, what they still need to learn, as well as what they want to do in life. This can include a range of goals including the type of career the student would like to pursue and the kind of living situation he/she hopes to have. IEP teams are challenged to select or design programs that will effectively engage students in learning and keep them on the path toward graduation.

Historically, the South Carolina has viewed transition planning as moving from secondary education to employment or agency-provided services. Transition has been viewed as a separate component and has not been closely correlated to low graduation rates or drop out rates for students with disabilities. With the development and implementation of our new Web-based IEP system, South Carolina is viewing transition as a central component of the IEP for all students with disabilities of transition age. When a student reaches transition age, the IEP becomes a transition IEP with an emphasis on post-school outcomes, whether the student is seeking employment, independent living, or a postsecondary education. Data for this indicator will be collected through the district self-assessment process, compliance and focused monitoring visits.

Baseline Data for FFY 2004 (2004-2005):

Since this is a new indicator, baseline data will be provided in FFY 2005 APR due February 1, 2007.

Discussion of Baseline Data:

Since this is a new indicator, baseline data will be provided in FFY 2005 APR due February 1, 2007.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	Since this is a new indicator, measurable and rigorous targets will be provided in FFY 2005 APR due February 1, 2007.
2006 (2006-2007)	
2007 (2007-2008)	
2008 (2008-2009)	
2009 (2009-2010)	
2010 (2010-2011)	One hundred percent of all youth aged 16 and above will have an IEP that includes coordinated, measurable, annual IEP goals and transition services that will reasonably enable the student to meet the post -secondary goals.

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Design a self-assessment process to assist LEAs and SOPs in analyzing transition goal data and in planning improvements. (See Indicator 15)	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC Leadership team • LEAs, SOPs • NCSEAM • Mid South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC)
Implement self-assessment instrument for LEAs and SOPs and review annually.	February 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC Leadership team • LEAs, SOPs
Develop regulations and policies:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Board of Education (SBE) regulations based on IDEA 04 	June 30, 2006 or no later than six month following the issuance of the federal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Regulations • National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) • OEC Leadership team • Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and revise SBE regulations concerning transition goals and services 	June 30, 2006 or no later than six month following the issuance of the federal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of School Quality • Office of Educational Leadership • OEC
Set six year and annual rigorous and measurable targets based on baseline data collected to date.	Before February 1, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Transition specialist • NCSEAM • OEC Leadership team

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Develop IEP process training guide to accompany Web-based IEP software program	October 2005 through June 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excent® staff • OEC staff • IEP Development Team
Conduct regional training on developing transition IEPs.	February 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • State Transition Specialist
Provide information about this reporting requirement, training on data collection, and how the information can inform schools and districts.	January 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) • State Transition Specialist
Provide technical assistance informed by data gathered through self-assessments of LEAs and SOPs, focused monitoring, and review of complaints/due process hearing requests related to transition.	June 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHEs • Professional organizations • Parent advocacy groups • State Transition Specialist • Stakeholders
Collaborate with departments of education within IHEs to develop appropriate preservice training and experiences concerning transition.	January 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • Office of Teacher Certification • IHE Departments of Education

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010**Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision/Effective Transition**

Indicator 14- Percent of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school (20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

Measurement: Percent = # of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school divided by # of youth assessed who had IEPs and are no longer in secondary school times 100.0.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

Each year the South Carolina State Department of Education (SCSDE) makes a special effort to collect from all high school principals the accomplishments of graduates attending college freshman classes. This information continues to be utilized by policy makers and other interested parties as well as being required by legislation. The Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, revised 1990, Sections 59-101-130 and 59-101-140, requires each high school principal in South Carolina to submit to the SCSDE the compiled freshman accomplishments of students who graduated from each school. In the spring of each year, guidance counselors collect information that reports activities pursued by high school graduates or completers. Information gathered to date is not representative of the state special education population nor does it include students who may have dropped out of school.

During school year 2005-2006, the SCSDE will work with the Partners in Transition to review and refine the state's post-school outcome data collection system. Additionally, Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) will design a system to collect information on youth with disabilities who drop out of school. The OEC will revise the system to improve the response level of and will build into the system an analysis and correction of non-response as needed. No personally identifiable information about individual children will be disclosed.

Baseline Data for FFY 2004 (2004-2005):

Since this is a new indicator, measurable and rigorous targets will be provided in FFY 2006 APR due February 1, 2008.

Discussion of Baseline Data:

Since this is a new indicator, measurable and rigorous targets will be provided in FFY 2006 APR due February 1, 2008.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	Since this is a new indicator, measurable and rigorous targets will be provided in FFY 2006 APR due February 1, 2008.
2006 (2006-2007)	
2007 (2007-2008)	
2008 (2008-2009)	
2009 (2009-2010)	
2010 (2010-2011)	

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Gather post-school outcome data through Freshman Report on students leaving during 2004-2005.	Spring 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Research • OEC
Develop instrument/method to collect outcome data for high school drop-outs with disabilities.	Fall 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • National Post-School Outcomes Center • State Transition Specialist • LEAs
Build baseline of exit and post-school outcome data annually.	Fall 2007 then annually in the Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Transition specialist • Office of Research • OEC Leadership team
Set six year and annual rigorous and measurable targets based on baseline data collected to date (to be submitted in the APR due February 2007).	Before February 1, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Transition specialist • Office of Research • OEC Leadership team • MSRRC

Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Adjust data collection protocol as needed to improve response rate.	Annually in the winter-spring 2007-2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Transition Specialist • OEC • South Carolina Partners in Transition Council • National Post-School Outcomes Center • Office of Research
Review and adjust the rigorous and measurable targets annually.	Annually by February 2007-2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Transition Specialist • OEC Leadership team • Partners in Transition

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Provide technical assistance to districts in analyzing and using the data to develop district improvement strategies.	Annually in the winter-spring 2007-2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Transition Specialist • OEC • Partners in Transition
Adjust training on data collection protocol as needed to improve response rate.	Annually in the winter-spring 2007-2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Transition Specialist • OEC • Partners in Transition • National Post-School Outcomes Center • Office of Research
Provide technical assistance informed by data gathered through self-assessments of LEAs and SOPs, focused monitoring, and review of complaints/due process hearing requests related to transition.	June 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHEs • Professional organizations • Parent advocacy groups • Stakeholders

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision

Indicator 15 – General supervision system (including monitoring, complaints, hearings, etc.) identifies and corrects noncompliance as soon as possible but in no case later than one year from identification.

Measurement:

A. Percent of noncompliance related to monitoring priority areas and indicators corrected within one year of identification:

- a. # of findings of noncompliance related to monitoring priority areas and indicators
- b. # of corrections completed as soon as possible but in no case later than one year from identification.

Percent = **b** divided by **a** times 100

For any noncompliance not corrected within one year of identification, describe what actions, including technical assistance and/or enforcement that the state has taken.

B. Percent of noncompliance related to areas not included in the above priority areas and indicators corrected within one year of identification:

- a. # of findings of noncompliance made related to such areas.
- b. # of corrections completed as soon as possible but in no case later than one year from identification.

Percent = **b** divided by **a** times 100.

For any noncompliance not corrected within one year of identification, describe what actions, including technical assistance and/or enforcement that the state has taken.

C. Percent of noncompliance identified through other mechanisms (complaints, local performance plans or annual performance reports, data review, desk audits, etc.) corrected within one year of identification:

- a. # of agencies in which noncompliance was identified through other mechanisms.
- b. # of findings of noncompliance made.
- c. # of corrections completed as soon as possible but in no case later than one year from identification.

Percent = **c** divided by **b** times 100.

For any noncompliance not corrected within one year of identification, describe what actions, including technical assistance and/or enforcement that the state has taken.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

South Carolina is required to implement a general supervision system that ensures students with disabilities receive a free, appropriate public education (FAPE). This system must identify and correct areas of noncompliance as soon as possible but in no case later than one year from identification.

The South Carolina State Department of Education (SCSDE) does an excellent job of identifying areas of noncompliance through the process of a review of folders within each district. The SCSDE continues to have difficulties ensuring that local education agencies (LEAs) consistently correct identified areas of noncompliance within the one-year timeline. The state must determine alternative corrective actions that will enable districts to close out issues of non-compliance within the one-year timeline. Traditionally, the data collected through interviews and folder reviews have not been triangulated to differentiate between individual file issues of noncompliance and systemic issues. This has resulted in the correction of individual file documentation issues, but failure to address systemic issues. The analysis of the data continues to be an area of needed improvement in the monitoring process to ensure systemic issues are identified and corrected.

Description of Previous Focused Monitoring Process:

The focused monitoring system was designed around the key elements that have the greatest potential for improving results for students with disabilities. Priorities and indicators were selected by a diverse group of stakeholders. Additionally, the issues identified in the SCSDE partnership agreement with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) were included. The OEC has prepared a data profile annually that provides vital information concerning indicators such as identification rates, placement, and disproportionate representation.

The stakeholders' steering committee worked collaboratively with the OEC to identify the priorities for focused monitoring for the 2004–05 school year. The priorities determined by this group were reading achievement for students with disabilities at the fourth and eighth grade levels and graduation with a regular state high school diploma for students with disabilities.

Districts were divided into enrollment groups and each group was ranked according to data measuring the priorities. The four lowest-performing districts on each indicator were targeted for onsite monitoring. Two districts were also selected at random for onsite monitoring. A district leadership team was formed in each district. The responsibilities of the district leadership team were initial planning, data collection, development and implementation of the action plan, and providing evidence of progress.

The district leadership team was also responsible for addressing the following issues:

- Access to the general curriculum in regular classrooms. The education of students with disabilities must be closely aligned with the general education curriculum and achieved with appropriate aids and services and supports in the regular classroom, whenever possible.
- Higher expectations for students with disabilities.
- Strengthening the role of parents and ensuring that families have opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
- High-quality, intensive professional development for all personnel who work with students with disabilities to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge necessary to prepare students for productive and independent living.
- Incentives for schoolwide approaches and interventions to reduce the need to identify students as disabled in order to address their learning needs.
- Resources focused on teaching and learning while reducing paperwork and requirements that do not assist in improving educational results.

Deficiencies and compliance violations identified during onsite monitoring required that the district develop and implement an action plan. The purpose of focused monitoring is to improve

the performance of students with disabilities, not just to identify problem areas within school districts. When areas of noncompliance are identified through observation, interview, and data analysis by the OEC monitoring team during the onsite visit, the intent is to develop an action plan with support from the OEC that will address the challenges and ultimately improve the performance of students with disabilities, which would lead to improvement in the adequate yearly progress.

Need for Change:

Based on feedback received from the OSEP and from a review of monitoring trends and patterns, the OEC has recognized that the current monitoring system has not been effective in correcting issues of noncompliance.

Additional barriers include state regulations and policies promulgated by other offices within the SCSDE that affect the provision of services and allocation of funds for students with disabilities. The approval process for district policies and procedures has not been effective. Even when district policies and procedures have been approved initially, amendments to those policies and procedures are sometimes not submitted to the OEC for approval. These issues will be addressed through the revision of the focused monitoring process which will include the development of a self-assessment instrument to be completed by LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart Programs.

Baseline Data:

Year	2002-2003		2003-2004	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Districts Monitored	27	32%	22	26%
Districts found in compliance	0	0%	0	0%
Districts found with areas of noncompliance	27	100%	22	100%
Districts in compliance within one year	5	18.5%	11	50%
Districts found in compliance in more than one year	11	41%	7	32%
Districts with partial compliance due to extenuating circumstances	10	37%	1	0%
Districts failing to meet compliance within one year with no extenuating circumstances	2	7%	3	18%
Sanctions issued – Tier 3	0	0%	4	18%

Complaints 2004-2005

Issues	Total
Failing to develop/comply with IEP	39
Failing to review/revise IEP	7
Failing to convene IEP meeting	7
Failing to involve IEP team members	10
Failing to make IEP accessible as needed	5
Failing to evaluate/reevaluate	12
Failing to conduct/implement/update FBA/BIP	13
Failing to provide/allow shadow	6
Failing to provide certified/qualified teachers/service providers	6
Failing to notify parent	9
Failing to notify within 7 days	4
Failing to ensure FAPE	12
Violating change of placement	13
Failing to address problem behaviors	1
Failing to adhere to disciplinary procedures	2
Failing to properly maintain records	3
Filing incomplete reports	1
Failing to obtain current medical reports	1
Failing to consider outside evaluation	2
Failing to provide transportation	2
Failing to respond to complaint/request	6
Failing to ensure consideration of ESY	1
Insisting student be placed on medication	1
Failing to initiate mediation/due process hearing	1
Failing to individualize homebound instruction	1
Refusing to consider counseling	1
Total	166

Due Process Hearings 2004-05

ISSUE	TOTAL
Appropriateness of BIP	1
Assessment	1
Change in location	1
Confidentiality	1
Consent for reevaluation	2
Discipline	2
Discrimination	2
Evaluation	2
Exclusion	1
Failure to communicate	1
Failure to develop an IEP	1
Failure to provide a FAPE	9
Falsification of Pact-Alt Portfolio	1
Identification	1
Least restricted environment	6
Parental participation in IEP meetings	1
Placement/Change in placement	9
Private school reimbursement	1
Reimbursement	1
Retaliation	1
School safety	1
Violation of Stay Put requirements	2
Violation of the IEP	3
Total	51

Mediation Agreements 2004-05

RESOLUTION	TOTAL
DISTRICT OR STUDENT/PARENT AGREED TO:	
Change or continuation of placement	8
Review/revise IEP	5
Convene IEP team	3
Conduct evaluation	1
Provide independent evaluation	2
Provide feedback/documentation	2
Schedule conference	3
Modify schedule	2
Provide transportation	1
Provide compensatory/supplementary services	3
Provide summer resources	1
Hire qualified staff	2
Reassign staff/responsibilities	2
Take assessment tests	1
Total	36

Discussion of Baseline Data:

The 2002-03 school year was the final year for compliance monitoring on a four-year cycle. It was determined after examining the results of the data that some districts were not found to be in compliance within a year because of the manner in which the SCSDE had required corrective actions to be reported. As of this date, all districts monitored during the 2002-03 school year are now compliant. During the 2003-04 school year 22 districts were selected for focused monitoring based on results of the previous four-year cycle on the areas identified by the OSEP. However, in addition to looking at the focused areas, the OEC conducted a full compliance monitoring of these districts, which led to all districts having identified areas of noncompliance.

The 2003-04 school year data indicated an increase in the percentage of districts that corrected issues of noncompliance within one year. This percentage rose from 18.5% to 50%. The increase can be attributed to onsite technical assistance and follow-up visits. Sanctions were issued to four districts that did not meet the one-year timeline.

The 2004-05 data will be included in the 2007 Annual Performance Report. The focused monitoring process began in January 2005. Results of this monitoring cycle are not yet available.

Baseline data for complaints for 2004-05 indicated that the 24% of the complaints received concerned failure to develop and/or implement the IEP. Eight percent of the complaints involved failure to conduct, implement, and/or update the functional behavior assessment/behavior intervention plan. Another 8% involved violation of change of placement. Seven percent involved failure to evaluate/reevaluate. Another 7% involved failure to ensure FAPE. Baseline data from Due Process hearings reflected that 36% of the issues involved in hearings concerned either failure to provide a FAPE or problems with placement/change in placement. Data from mediation agreements indicated that 22% of the mediation agreements involved a change or continuation of placement. Fourteen percent involved review or revision of the IEP.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	100% of districts in South Carolina will resolve identified issues of noncompliance within one year.
2006 (2006-2007)	100% of districts in South Carolina will resolve identified issues of noncompliance within one year.
2007 (2007-2008)	100% of districts in South Carolina will resolve identified issues of noncompliance within one year.
2008 (2008-2009)	100% of districts in South Carolina will resolve identified issues of noncompliance within one year.

2009 (2009-2010)	100% of districts in South Carolina will resolve identified issues of noncompliance within one year.
2010 (2010-2011)	100% of districts in South Carolina will resolve identified issues of noncompliance within one year.

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Based upon monitoring trends, data collected, and feedback provided by the OSEP, the OEC will review and revise the focused monitoring process. This process will identify systemic issues of noncompliance and assist LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs with the development of action plans to address these issues of noncompliance.

The process will triangulate data from a self-assessment to be completed by all LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs and submitted annually to the OEC; from a review of complaints, Due Process hearing results, mediations, and resolution agreements; from feedback from the OSEP; and from annual data collected through the Excent Online® system concerning the SPP indicators in order to determine statewide systemic issues of noncompliance. The OEC will develop and utilize a rubric designed to identify these statewide systemic issues. Once these are identified, the OEC will utilize the problem solving process to determine causation. The OEC will work with personnel from other offices within the SCSDE to ensure that existing policies, procedures, and practices are supporting the correction of issues of noncompliance and are consistent with the implementation of the IDEA '04.

LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs will then be selected for onsite monitoring based on an analysis of these data elements as related to the statewide issues. Two LEAs will be chosen at random for onsite monitoring as well. The OEC will assist LEAs in applying the problem solving process to determine causation of issues and to develop action plans that will address the issues. The action plans must include strategies for correction, timelines for ensuring compliance within one year of identification of issues of noncompliance, and progress monitoring procedures for other systemic issues as well as procedures to ensure sustainability of the corrections. The action plan will also designate resources needed by the LEA for implementation.

Technical assistance and resource allocation will be organized around the regional consortia to which LEAs belong. The OEC will coordinate these efforts to provide professional development to assist in the implementation of these action plans. This represents a proactive approach to addressing systemic issues rather than the reactive approach that has proven to be ineffective in the past.

In order to provide effective and efficient technical assistance to LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs, the OEC will implement a goals-based professional development plan for all OEC staff. Staff will engage in meaningful, quality professional development activities that are directed toward ultimately improving student academic achievement and functional performance.

When LEAs are unable to resolve the issues of noncompliance within one year, sanctions will be put into place. The OEC will develop a prescriptive action plan to be implemented by the LEA. This may include the designation of how funds will be allocated and expended by the LEA and specific programs or processes to be used.

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Develop a data collection system to identify systemic issues of noncompliance, to monitor timelines, and to assist in the resolution of issues.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a self-assessment process that will be incorporated into LEAs' strategic plans. 	November 2005 to April 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff Office of School Quality National Center for Special Education Accountability and Monitoring (NCSEAM)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a review process for complaints, Due Process hearing, mediations, resolution agreements, and calls to Ombudsman. 	November 2005 to June 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff Office of General Counsel NCSEAM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the Excent Online® system to include all necessary data elements. 	November 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff Horizon staff Office of Research Office of Technology LEA pilot staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect all required data through the Excent Online® system. This will require all LEAs to use the Excent Online® system. 	November 2005 to December 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff Horizon staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the use of the Excent Online® system to HeadStart programs. 	June 2006 to May 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff Horizon staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a rubric to crosswalk and triangulate data to determine which districts are to be monitored onsite. 	November 2005 to June 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff NCSEAM Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a process to ensure that the corrective action of systemic noncompliance issues is sustained. 	November 2005 to June 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff NCSEAM Stakeholders

Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Develop regulations and policies:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Board of Education (SBE) regulations based on IDEA 04. 	June 30, 2006 or no later than six month following the issuance of the federal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Regulations National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) OEC Leadership team Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and revise existing eligibility criteria to ensure that students are being identified appropriately as having a disability and as needing special education. 	June 30, 2006 or no later than six month following the issuance of the federal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Regulations NASDSE OEC Leadership team Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop training modules concerning the implementation of IDEA '04. 	December 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff Institutions of higher education (IHE) LEA staff
Develop and implement a comprehensive goals-based professional development plan for all OEC staff.	December 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC staff Office of Human Resources Office of Educator Certification IHE NASDSE Other federal technical assistance providers State professional organizations
Develop a system for the provision of technical assistance organized on the regional consortium model.	December 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEC Leadership team Stakeholders IHE
Develop process to determine validity of complaints as defined by IDEA '04.	June 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC staff Federal Regulations

Programs/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Participate in professional development activities that are designed to strengthen skills and knowledge	January 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • Office of Human Resources • Office of Educator Certification • IHE • NASDSE • Other federal technical assistance providers • State professional organizations
Provide professional development concerning the use of the problem solving process to assist LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs in identifying issues of noncompliance and using data to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.	March 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of School Leadership • IHE • OEC staff • South Carolina Association of School Administrators
Provide professional development concerning the use of the self-assessment process to identify and correct issues of noncompliance	April 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff
Provide professional development concerning the development of effective and compliant IEPs using the Excent Online® system	November 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horizon staff • OEC staff • LEA pilot staff
Provide professional development concerning the implementation of IDEA '04.	December 2005 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHE • NASDSE staff
Provide professional development concerning the integration of the self-assessment process into LEAs' strategic plans	June 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • Office of School Quality • Office of School Leadership
Provide technical assistance concerning the development and monitoring of corrective actions by LEAs, SOPs, and HeadStart programs.	June 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • Office of Curriculum and Standards • Office of School Quality • Office of School Leadership
Submit the State Personnel Development Grant to establish regional technical assistance centers.	2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC staff • IHE staff

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision

Indicator 16: Percent of signed written complaints with reports issued that were resolved within 60-day timeline or a timeline extended for exceptional circumstances with respect to a particular complaint.

Measurement:

Percent = (1.1(b) + 1.1(c)) divided by (1.1) times 100.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

The South Carolina State Department of Education (SCSDE) complaint management system is a mechanism that provides procedures for the effective implementation of the State's general supervisory responsibility under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act '04 (IDEA '04). The system is based upon a complaint investigation process that provides a means of ensuring a free, appropriate public education is provided to students with disabilities. The process is a tool for reviewing all relevant information, making an independent determination of whether a violation occurred, and identifying and correcting issues of noncompliance with the IDEA '04 and its implementing regulations. At the conclusion of an investigation, the SCSDE issues a letter of resolution (LOR) containing specific findings, conclusions, the reasons for the final decision, specific corrective actions, and specific timelines by which the local education agency (LEA), state operated program (SOP), or HeadStart program must complete corrective actions. The LEA, SOP, or HeadStart program must provide documentation of the completion of the corrective actions. Upon receipt of the documentation for all corrective actions, the SCSDE determines whether the district/agency fully implemented the corrective actions and whether these actions corrected the issues of noncompliance.

In general, districts/agencies are required to complete the implementation of corrective actions within thirty calendar days of the date of the LOR, but no later than one year after the identification of noncompliance. Corrective actions are monitored. If corrective actions do not resolve the identified issues of noncompliance, the district/agency is notified of the outstanding issues of noncompliance. The SCSDE provides further clarification and explanation of the findings and corrective actions, if necessary; and/or provides technical assistance so that corrective actions can be properly implemented. When documentation of full implementation of the corrective actions is reviewed and approved by the SCSDE, the district/agency is notified in writing that the corrective actions are satisfactory and the case is closed. If a district/agency fails to submit documentation of corrective actions in a timely manner or the SCSDE is not satisfied with the actions taken by the district/agency to correct the identified noncompliance, the SCSDE provides written notice that sanctions may be imposed for continued issues of noncompliance and additional guidance and technical assistance are provided if necessary.

Feedback from the United States Office of Special Education Program's (OSEP) most recent monitoring visit, indicated that the SCSDE did not ensure that formal written complaints were resolved and a final decision issued within sixty calendar days of receipt of the complaints. In an effort to resolve this issue, the SCSDE developed strategies and implemented improvement activities, which included hiring a complaint investigator and paralegal and improving the previous complaint tracking mechanism.

Baseline Data for FFY 2004 (2004-2005):

SECTION A: Signed, written complaints	
(1) Signed, written complaints total	98
(1.1) Complaints with reports issued	72
(a) Reports with findings	63
(b) Reports within timeline	62
(c) Reports within extended timelines	1
(1.2) Complaints withdrawn or dismissed	26
(1.3) Complaints pending	0
(a) Complaint pending a due process hearing	0

Discussion of Baseline Data:

The improvement strategies and activities have increased staff's awareness of each due date that falls within the sixty-day timeline and the need for continuous monitoring of each individual complaint. As a result, all eighty-four of the complaints investigated (out of the one hundred filed) during the period from July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004 were resolved and a final decision issued within sixty calendar days of receipt. The SCSDE evidenced continued efforts and a commitment to implement its improvement strategies and activities to maintain compliance during the 2003–04 school year by resolving and issuing final decisions in the seventy-two complaints investigated (out of the ninety-eight filed) within sixty calendar days of receipt of the written complaints, during the baseline reporting period from July 2004 to June 30, 2005.

Ninety-eight signed, written complaints were initiated during the period of July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005. Seventy-two of these complaints resulted in written reports issued as of sixty days following the end of the reporting period. Of the twenty-six complaints that did not result in written reports, nine were withdrawn by the complainants, sixteen were closed due to no alleged violations of the IDEA, federal or State Board of Education regulations, state policies and procedures, or the student's individualized education program, and one was set aside because the same issues were raised in a due process hearing that was initiated at the same time as the complaint.

Sixty-three of the seventy-two reports issued were reports with findings where the SCSDE found the district/agency to be in non-compliance. Nine reports had no findings of non-compliance by the district/agency. Sixty-two of the reports with findings were issued within sixty calendar days after receiving the complaints. One of the reports with a finding of non-compliance involved issues within an appropriately extended timeline. The timeline was extended as a result of setting aside the complaint when the complainant filed a due process hearing request that included the same issues raised in the complaint. The complainant later withdrew the due process hearing in favor of resolving the issues through the complaint process.

Twenty-five complaints were either withdrawn or dismissed. There were no complaints initiated between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005 that were still pending as of August 29, 2005 (sixty days following the end of the reporting period).

All complaint investigations were completed in a timely manner. The SCSDE met its measurable and rigorous target of 100% for the 2004–05 school year.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	100% of complaint investigations completed in a timely manner.
2006 (2006-2007)	100% of complaint investigations completed in a timely manner.
2007 (2007-2008)	100% of complaint investigations completed in a timely manner.
2008 (2008-2009)	100% of complaint investigations completed in a timely manner.
2009 (2009-2010)	100% of complaint investigations completed in a timely manner.
2010 (2010-2011)	100% of complaint investigations completed in a timely manner.

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Develop a process to determine validity of complaints as defined by IDEA '04.	June 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC staff Federal Regulations
Maintain 100% compliance with the timely resolution of complaint investigations and issuance of written decisions.	January 2006-December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC staff SCSDE developed tracking system
Fill vacant complaint investigator position.	November 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC staff
Continue to monitor the implementation of existing improvement strategies and activities.	January 2006-December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC staff SCSDE developed tracking system
Continue monitoring of each individual complaint and the due dates during the sixty-day timeline.	January 2006-December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC staff SCSDE developed tracking system
Continue to reevaluate and update the State's tracking mechanisms to include specifically defined reasons for the complaint and other factors to be used in the identification of systemic issues.	January 2006-December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC staff

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Review complaints with the OEC Leadership Team and/or appropriate SCSDE staff monthly to identify statewide systemic issues and plan effective technical assistance.	January 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC staff
Provide parent and LEA training to increase awareness of the complaint investigation process.	January 2006-December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC staff ProParents
Increase technical assistance and training for LEAs in an effort to reduce issues of noncompliance	January 2006-December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC staff
Encourage collaboration between parents and LEAs and efforts to resolve parental concerns and disputes through the IEP team and other proactive processes.	January 2006-December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC staff ProParents

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision

Indicator 17: Percent of fully adjudicated due process hearing requests that were fully adjudicated within the 45-day timeline or a timeline that is properly extended by the hearing officer at the request of either party.

Measurement:

Percent = $(3.2(a) + 3.2(b))$ divided by (3.2) times 100.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

The South Carolina State Department of Education (SCSDE) Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) due process hearing system is a mechanism that ensures the effective implementation of the State's general supervisory responsibility under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act 2004 (IDEA '04). The system is designed to ensure compliance with and provision of procedural safeguards and rights to parents and students with disabilities. Hearing officers within the system are vested with the authority to grant the relief necessary to ensure the appropriate identification, evaluation, placement, and provision of a free, appropriate public education to students with disabilities. The SCSDE exercises its authority to ensure the implementation and enforcement of any specific relief granted by due process hearing officers in regards to any finding of noncompliance or failure to appropriately identify, evaluate, place, or provide a free appropriate public education to a student with a disability.

The United States Office of Special Education Program's (OSEP) January 2003 monitoring report noted that from 1999 to 2001, the SCSDE did not track timelines from the date the hearing request was filed with a local education agency (LEA), state operated programs (SOP), and HeadStart programs until the date of the decision. The 2001-02 APR reported another issue in that only 16.7% of the due process hearing reviews for the 2001–2002 school year were conducted in a timely manner and no due process hearing reviews for the 2002–2003 school year were conducted in a timely manner.

In an effort to correct these issues, the SCSDE developed and submitted improvement strategies and activities that included a system for monitoring records from due process hearings and state-level reviews to ensure that extensions are well-documented and only granted by due process hearing and state-level review officers for good cause. The SCSDE also developed strategies and activities for monitoring individual districts/agencies for compliance regarding timelines. Also, corrective actions would be implemented if timelines are not met. Restrictions and sanctions for timeline infractions were also added to the SCSDE improvement strategies and activities, which were accepted by the OSEP on the condition of the inclusion of data and analysis demonstrating progress toward compliance on meeting both local due process hearing and state-level review timelines in the SCSDE APR.

Improvement activities and strategies included the following:

- Tracking individual due process hearing officers for compliance with timelines;
- Maintaining regular contact with due process hearing officers, state-level review officers, appropriate district/agency personnel, and school district attorneys;
- Developing and implementing a web-based tracking system to monitor district/agency and due process hearing officer compliance with timelines;
- Providing professional development for due process hearing officers, state-level review officers, district/agency staff, advocacy organizations, attorneys representing districts/agencies, and parents; and
- Providing written guidance to districts/agencies, due process hearing officers, state-level review officers, advocacy organizations, and attorneys representing districts/agencies.

Baseline Data for FFY 2004 (2004-2005):

SECTION C: Hearing requests	
(3) Hearing requests total	19
(3.1) Resolution sessions	0
(a) Settlement agreements	0
(3.2) Hearings (fully adjudicated)	9
(a) Decisions within timeline	7
(b) Decisions within extended timeline	2
(3.3) Resolved without a hearing	10

SECTION D: Expedited hearing requests (related to disciplinary decision)	
(4) Expedited hearing requests total	0
(4.1) Resolution sessions	0
(a) Settlement agreements	0
(4.2) Expedited hearings (fully adjudicated)	0
(a) Change of placement ordered	0

Discussion of Baseline Data:

All nine of the local due process hearings (out of the nineteen requested) were fully adjudicated with written decisions issued in a timely manner during the baseline-reporting period from July 2004 to June 30, 2005. All five of the local due process hearings appealed to the second tier of the system had written decisions issued by the appointed state-level review officer in a timely manner.

Nineteen local due process hearings were requested between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005. Nine local due process hearings were fully adjudicated and written decisions issued in a timely manner. Of the nine written decisions, seven were issued within the required forty-five day timeline and two were issued within properly extended timelines. The district/agency prevailed in eight fully adjudicated local due process hearings. The parent prevailed in the one additional fully adjudicated local due process hearing.

Five local due process hearings were appealed with written decisions from the state-level reviews issued in a timely manner. Of the five written decisions appealed to the state-level, the district/agency prevailed in both the local due process hearings and the state-level reviews.

Ten local due process hearings were resolved without a hearing. Of the ten local due process hearings resolved without a hearing, five were dismissed by the hearing officers; three were withdrawn by the filing party; and two were settled prior to the hearing date. No expedited due process hearings were requested between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005.

All due process hearing and state-level reviews were completed in a timely manner. The SCSDE met its measurable and rigorous target for the 2004–05 school year.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	100% of due process hearing and state-level reviews were completed in a timely manner.
2006 (2006-2007)	100% of due process hearing and state-level reviews were completed in a timely manner.
2007 (2007-2008)	100% of due process hearing and state-level reviews were completed in a timely manner.
2008 (2008-2009)	100% of due process hearing and state-level reviews were completed in a timely manner.
2009 (2009-2010)	100% of due process hearing and state-level reviews were completed in a timely manner.
2010 (2010-2011)	100% of due process hearing and state-level reviews were completed in a timely manner.

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Maintain 100% compliance with the timely resolution of due process hearings and state-level reviews and issuance of written decisions.	January 2006– December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of General Counsel • OEC • Office of Technology
Revise web-based tracking system to include new due process hearing timeline requirements to monitor districts/agencies and due process hearing and state-level review officer compliance with timelines.	January 2006– December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office General Counsel • OEC • Office of Technology
Investigate addition of due process module to Excent® Online.	March 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • Horizon Software
Track individual due process hearing and state-level review officers for compliance with timelines and maintain regular contact with due process hearing officers, state-level review officers, appropriate district/agency personnel, and school district attorneys throughout the hearing process to monitor compliance during the forty-five day timeline.	January 2006– December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of General Counsel • OEC • Office of Technology
Monitor records from due process hearings and state-level reviews to ensure that extensions are for good cause and are well-documented.	January 2006– December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of General Counsel • OEC

Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Monitor individual districts/agencies for compliance trends and impose corrective actions and sanctions if noncompliance is not corrected in a timely manner.	January 2006–December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC
Impose restrictions and sanctions.	January 2006–December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Review complaints with the OEC Leadership Team monthly to identify statewide systemic issues and plan effective technical assistance.	January 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC staff
Provide professional development for due process hearing and state-level review officers, district/agency staff, advocacy organizations, attorneys representing districts/agencies, and SCSDE staff.	January 2006–December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC
Provide written guidance to districts/agencies, due process hearing officers, state-level review officers, advocacy organizations and attorneys representing districts/agencies, as necessary, relative to the mandate for compliance with timelines and other related issues.	January 2006–December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC staff

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010**Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision**

Indicator 18: Percent of hearing requests that went to resolution sessions that were resolved through resolution session settlement agreements.

Measurement:

Percent = 3.1(a) divided by (3.1) times 100.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

As of July 1, 2005, in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act 2004 (IDEA '04), a district/agency must convene a meeting with the parents and relevant members of the individualized education program (IEP) team who have specific knowledge of the facts identified in any due process hearing request, submitted by either the parents or district/agency, to provide an opportunity for the parents of the student to discuss the due process hearing request and the facts that form the basis of the due process hearing request. The process provides the district/agency and parents the opportunity to resolve the due process hearing request through a less adversarial, less expensive avenue. The process is intended to assist parents of students with disabilities and districts/agencies in resolving disagreements regarding the identification, evaluation, placement, and provision of a free appropriate public education for students with disabilities. Any agreement reached by the parties must be set forth in a written resolution agreement and signed by the parties. The signed, written resolution agreement is enforceable in any state court of competent jurisdiction or in a United States District Court. The district/agency must maintain a copy of the resolution agreement and provide a copy to the due process hearing officer, parents, and SCSDE.

The SCSDE will monitor compliance with the requirement to schedule and conduct resolution sessions within fifteen calendar days of the due process hearing request being filed through the web-based tracking system, a tracking log that is a part of each individual due process hearing request file maintained by the SCSDE, and regular contact with due process hearing officers, districts/agencies, and attorneys representing districts/agencies during the due process hearing timeline.

Baseline Data for FFY 2004 (2004-2005):

Since this is a new indicator, baseline data will be provided in the FFY 2005 APR due February 1, 2007.

Discussion of Baseline Data:

Since this is a new indicator, baseline data will be provided in FFY 2005 APR due February 1, 2007.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	<i>Since this is a new indicator, measurable and rigorous targets will be provided in FFY 2005 APR due February 1, 2007</i>
2006 (2006-2007)	
2007 (2007-2008)	
2008 (2008-2009)	
2009 (2009-2010)	
2010 (2010-2011)	

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Additional improvement activities will be developed once baseline is established.

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Revise web-based tracking system to include new due process hearing timeline requirements to monitor districts/agencies and due process officer compliance with timelines.	July 2005–January 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office General Counsel • OEC • Office of Technology
Track individual due process hearing requests for compliance with timelines and maintain regular contact with due process hearing officers, appropriate district/agency personnel, and school district attorneys throughout the hearing process to monitor compliance.	July 2005–January 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Office General Counsel • OEC • Office of Technology
Monitor records from individual due process hearings to ensure that extensions for resolution sessions do not go beyond set time periods.	July 2005–January 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of General Counsel • OEC
Monitor individual districts/agencies for compliance trends and impose corrective actions and sanctions if noncompliance persists.	July 2005–January 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of General Counsel • OEC

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Review complaints with the OEC Leadership Team monthly to identify statewide systemic issues and plan effective technical assistance.	January 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of General Counsel • OEC staff
Provide professional development for due process hearing and state-level review officers, district/agency staff, advocacy organizations, attorneys representing districts/agencies, and SCSDE staff.	July 2005–January 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of General Counsel • OEC
Provide written guidance to districts/agencies, due process hearing officers, state-level review officers, advocacy organizations and attorneys representing districts/agencies, as necessary, relative to the mandate for compliance with timelines and other related issues.	July 2005–January 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of General Counsel • OEC

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision

Indicator 19: Percent of mediations held that resulted in mediation agreements.

Measurement:

Percent = $(2.1(a)(i) + 2.1(b)(i))$ divided by (2.1) times 100.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

The South Carolina State Department of Education (SCSDE) Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) system for mediating conflicts arising from the provision of special education and related services to students with disabilities is a procedure that can be advantageous for everyone involved in the dispute resolution process. The process is intended to assist parents of students with disabilities and districts/agencies in resolving disagreements regarding the identification, evaluation, placement, and provision of a free appropriate public education for students with disabilities. In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act 2004 (IDEA '04) any agreement reached by the parties to the dispute must be set forth in a written mediation agreement. The signed written mediation agreement is enforceable in any state court of competent jurisdiction or in a United States District Court.

A trained mediator works with the parties during a non-adversarial session to guide them toward a mutually satisfactory solution. The session is more structured than a parent-school conference, but less formal than a due process hearing. The process is voluntary and optional for both parties and is designed to assist parents and district/agency personnel in focusing on the unique needs of the student rather than on issues that divide them. Additionally, because the mediation session is completely confidential, it encourages open communication.

The parent, guardian, educational surrogate parent, or district/agency may request mediation when the parties reach an impasse after making good faith efforts to resolve differences and are unable or unwilling to modify their positions without outside assistance. If both parties agree to mediation, each must sign the Mediation Request Form provided by the SCSDE. This form is available in district/agency special education offices and on the SCSDE Web site. The district/agency must maintain a copy of the Mediation Request Form and provide a copy to the mediator, parents, and SCSDE. Unless both parties agree to attempt mediation as a way to resolve their disagreement, a mediation session cannot be scheduled. Once both parties agree to mediation and sign the Mediation Request Form, the district/agency must obtain a mediator from the list provided by the SCSDE. If the district/agency and parent do not agree on the assignment of a mediator, the SCSDE shall appoint one from the approved list. A mediation session should be scheduled to occur within fourteen calendar days of both parties agreeing to participate in the mediation session. The district/agency should immediately take steps to obtain a mediator or seek the appointment of a mediator by the SCSDE.

Although mediation may occur at any time, it may not in any way interfere with either the right to a due process hearing or with due process hearing timelines. Mediation is not a required step prior to requesting a due process hearing. It may be used as an alternative to a due process hearing or at the same time as a due process hearing. Either party to the mediation may end the

session and proceed with a due process hearing at any time. If this occurs, all the procedural safeguards relative to due process hearings must be implemented.

The district/agency must provide parents with written information identifying the mediator and basic guidelines governing mediation. Immediately after accepting an assignment, the mediator contacts all parties and advises them of his/her name and telephone number and sets the date, time, location, structure, and purpose for the session, and determines who will participate. The mediator also answers any questions about the process and may request additional information from the parties. If the parents cannot be reached by telephone, the mediator must send a letter (by certified mail, return receipt requested), which includes all the information that would have been covered by telephone.

Generally, sessions are completed in three or four hours, depending on the complexity of the issue(s), but mediation sessions may take up to a full day. It is recommended that participants plan to set aside a full day.

The student's current placement remains the same during the entire mediation process. The student's placement may only be changed if the parents and the individualized education program team agree to do so, or a due process hearing officer or court removes the student on the basis of dangerousness to self or others.

Baseline Data for FFY 2004 (2004-2005):

SECTION B: Mediation requests	
(2) Mediation requests total	11
(2.1) Mediations	11
(a) Mediations related to due process	1
(i) Mediation agreements	1
(b) Mediations not related to due process	10
(i) Mediation agreements	8
(2.2) Mediations not held (including pending)	0

Discussion of Baseline Data:

Eleven mediation requests were filed from July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005. One mediation request was filed simultaneously with a request for a due process hearing. This dispute was resolved and the parties entered into a mediation agreement; therefore, the request for a due process hearing was withdrawn.

Ten of the eleven mediation requests were not related to a due process hearing request. Of the remaining ten requests, eight resulted in mediation agreements. The remaining two mediation requests were submitted by the same parent and withdrawn prior to the mediator having an opportunity to contact the parent to set dates for the mediation sessions.

Nine out of the eleven (81.8%) mediation requests resulted in mediation agreements for the 2004–05 school year. All of the mediation requests filed during the 2003–04 school year resulted in mediation agreements. Five out of the six mediation requests filed during the 2002–03 school year resulted in mediation agreements. The number of mediation requests increased significantly during the 2005–06 school year. The SCSDE has aggressively undertaken steps to

more effectively provide information regarding this dispute resolution mechanism. The issues involved in mediation requests typically concentrate on placement issues.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	Increase in mediation agreements by one percent annually.
2006 (2006-2007)	Increase in mediation agreements by one percent annually.
2007 (2007-2008)	Increase in mediation agreements by one percent annually.
2008 (2008-2009)	Increase in mediation agreements by one percent annually.
2009 (2009-2010)	Increase in mediation agreements by one percent annually.
2010 (2010-2011)	Increase in mediation agreements by one percent annually.

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Track each individual mediation request and monitor mediation agreements	January 2006–December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of General Counsel • OEC
Support districts/agencies in their continuous efforts to improve outcomes for students with disabilities and maintain relationships with parents of students with disabilities by availing themselves of this option prior to initiating more formal dispute resolution processes.	January 2006–December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of General Counsel • OEC

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Review complaints with the OEC Leadership Team monthly to identify statewide systemic issues and plan effective technical assistance.	January 2006 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC staff
Provide professional development for due process hearing officers, districts/agencies, advocacy organizations, attorneys representing districts/agencies, and SCSDE staff to increase awareness of the mediation system	January 2006–December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC
Provide written guidance to districts/agencies, due process hearing officers, advocacy organizations, and attorneys representing districts/agencies regarding the availability of this alternative dispute resolution mechanism.	January 2006–December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of General Counsel OEC

Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010**Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision**

Indicator 20 – State reported data (618 and State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report) are timely and accurate.

Measurement:

State reported data, including 618 data and annual performance reports, are:

- a. Submitted on or before February 1 for child count, including race and ethnicity, placement; November 1 for exiting, discipline, personnel; and February 1 for Annual Performance Reports; and
- b. Accurate

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCSDE) Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) is committed to reporting accurate data to United States Office of Special Programs (OSEP) in a timely manner. The accuracy of data is important as the state moves forward in an effort to problem solve through the use of data-based decision making.

South Carolina has historically had systemic issues with accurate and timely data collection. A data manager was employed in 2002 in the Office of Exceptional Children. With the assistance of WESTAT, an electronic system for data collection was created to facilitate the accuracy of the 618 data collection for Tables 1 and 3. Local education agencies (LEA), state-operated programs (SOP), and HeadStart programs were provided software to ensure matching data counts. The data collected in December 2002 was presented to districts at the 2003 OEC Spring Administrators' Training. Districts were provided an analysis of the data submitted, as well as, data on disproportionate representation. Districts were instructed on how data would be used in the future in South Carolina.

The OEC is currently collecting all 618 data electronically through a system of data entry spreadsheets and an Access database. Each district/agency completes the spreadsheet and transmits it to the OEC data manager. The data manager imports the data into the Access database and aggregates the district/agency data into a statewide database. The data are then used to complete the 618 data reports to the OSEP as well as to provide baseline and trend data for purposes of the APR and SPP. The current method of data collection and reporting has built-in error checking that is used to ensure that each district/agency accurately reports the data. Each spreadsheet has logic built in to create flags when errors occur and districts are required to correct the errors before submitting the data to SCSDE. This method has become successful with proper technical assistance and training over the past two years. With technical assistance from the National Center on Special Education Accountability and Monitoring (NCSEAM), special education directors will be given a framework to utilize their current data for decision-making in the self-assessment process for data from the 2005–06 year.

The main drawback to this data collection method is that it is not directly connected to the statewide student information system, School Administrative Student Information (SASI). Data reporting for the SPP and the APR require data comparisons between students with disabilities

and their nondisabled peers. The current system of collection does not provide a means to collect data needed for all students at a school level.

The OEC has collaborated with other SCSDE offices to redesign the data collection process to allow for the required data collection. The initial implementation of this process did not allow collection of data directly from SASI due to system flexibility issues and to policy issues. The SCSDE has purchased a new special education software package, Excent® Online, to assist this process. This software will interface with SASI to provide the necessary data. Forty-seven percent of the districts/agencies will have implemented the software by January 2006. This system will provide the necessary student-level data and resolve the policy issues that exist with SASI. The system also has error checking and data verification reports included and will make data reporting simpler for districts since data will be housed at the SCSDE in a centralized database. The data will be available to the SCSDE staff. Districts/agencies will need only to verify the data.

With data being available at the SCSDE, the OEC staff will have access to the data needed for reporting progress and slippage, trends, and other performance issues in the APR and the SPP. This process will improve the accuracy and efficiency of data reporting to the OSEP by improving the timeliness and reducing the number of revisions to the data. This will also provide necessary data for assisting districts/agencies in utilizing the problem solving process to identify needs, implement improvement activities, and monitor progress.

Baseline Data for FFY 2004 (2004-2005):

Category	2003-04	2004-2005
Percentage of districts/agencies submitting Tables 1,2,3,4, & 5 electronically	Not available for submission	100%
Percentage of districts/agencies submitting Tables 1 & 3 by SCSDE established deadline	79%	97.9%
Percentage of districts/agencies submitting Tables 1 & 3 with matching child and disability counts	100%	100%
Percentage of districts/agencies submitting Tables 2, 4, & 5 by SCSDE established deadline	100%	96.4%

Category	OSEP	SCSDE	Revisions	Final Approval
618 Data Submission to Westat	OSEP DATES	OEC Submission Date	REVISION DATES	Passed into OSEP Database
Table 1	February 1	February 1	March 22	Yes
Table 2	November 1	November 1	None	Yes
Table 3	February 1	February 1	March 23	Yes
Table 4	November 1	November 1	March 4	Yes
Table 5	November 1	November 1	March 4, June 5	Yes
APR Submission to OSEP	March 31	March 31	None	Waiting on OSEP Letter
SPP Submission to OSEP	December 1	December 1		

Discussion of Baseline Data:

The tables above show feedback from state and federal data submissions. The first table shows the percentage of districts that reported their data electronically and submitted the data accurately in a timely manner. South Carolina is showing a good increase in districts/agencies reporting to districts. The second table shows the results of the data submission to the OSEP and Westat for each 618 data report the APR and the SPP.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	25% of districts will report their December 1 Child count using Excent® All state reported 618 data, the State Performance Plan, and Annual Performance Report will be reported by designated timelines and with 100% accuracy.
2006 (2006-2007)	90% of districts will report Tables 1 and 3 using Excent® All state reported 618 data, the State Performance Plan, and Annual Performance Report will be reported by designated timelines and with 100% accuracy.
2007 (2007-2008)	100% of districts will report tables 1 and 3 child count using Excent® Extract 100% of Table 1 and 3 reports from Excent® Online database without district data submission All state reported 618 data, the State Performance Plan, and Annual Performance Report will be reported by designated timelines and with 100% accuracy.

2008 (2008-2009)	<p>100% of districts will report all required 618 data using Excent®.</p> <p>Extract 100% of all 618 data from Excent® Online database without district data submission.</p> <p>All state reported 618 data, the State Performance Plan, and Annual Performance Report will be reported by designated timelines and with 100% accuracy.</p>
2009 (2009-2010)	<p>100% of districts will report all required 618 data using Excent®.</p> <p>Extract 100% of all 618 data from Excent® Online database without district data submission.</p> <p>All state reported 618 data, the State Performance Plan, and Annual Performance Report will be reported by designated timelines and with 100% accuracy.</p>
2010 (2010-2011)	<p>100% of districts will report all required 618 data using Excent®.</p> <p>Extract 100% of all 618 data from Excent® Online database without district data submission.</p> <p>All state reported 618 data, the State Performance Plan, and Annual Performance Report will be reported by designated timelines and with 100% accuracy.</p>

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

Monitoring/Procedural Administration		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Develop a policies and procedures manual for data collection for students with disabilities.	September 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC • SCSDE Technology Staff • SCSDE Office of Research
Secure funding for FTE to work in the Office of Research to coordinate collection and analysis of data for the Office of Exceptional Children	2006-07 Fiscal Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director, Office of Exceptional Children
Install Server at SCSDE to house Excent® database or secure contract to house data with Horizon.	2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCSDE Technology Staff • Horizon
Extract Excent® database and roll into State Data Warehouse.	January 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Manager • SCSDE Tech Staff

Program/Professional Development		
Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources
Provide data reporting technical assistance to all districts/agencies. Specific emphasis on Excent® online system.	November 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Manager • Excent® Online trainer
Present and explain data profiles to districts as feedback	October 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Manager • NCSEAM
Establish Technical Assistance and FAQ documents for all data reports online.	November 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Manager
Provide professional development and technical assistance raining concerning Excent® to districts.	January 2005- December 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excent® Online staff • OEC